HORNS

a screenplay by

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based on the novel by

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"but whatever lies behind the door
there is nothing much to do
angel or devil, I don't care
for in front of that door...
there is you."
("My Death" - David Bowie)

OVER OPENING CREDITS - A SERIES OF NEWSPAPER HEADLINES:

"LOCAL GIRL FOUND DEAD IN WOODS"

"GIRL FOUGHT WITH BOYFRIEND ON NIGHT OF MURDER"

"VICTIM'S BOYFRIEND QUESTIONED IN HER MURDER"

"IS THIS THE FACE OF THE DEVIL?"

And below this last headline, a photograph of a dissolute and unshaven young man scowling into the camera. He looks like he might be capable of anything. And we DISSOLVE TO...

INT. IG PERRISH'S APARTMENT - MORNING

...the face of the young man in the photo. This is IG PERRISH (26). He is snoring loudly. He's wearing a whiskey-stained T-shirt and ratty old boxers. An empty bottle of Jack Daniels and a pack of cigarettes sit on the bedside table. The walls are lined with posters of rock and roll shows, and the shelves are full of a lot of old vinyl records.

Ig's eyes twitch open. He groans and rubs his temples. Ig is really hung over. His first impulse is to pull a cigarette out of the pack and light it. Ig definitely looks like a lone wolf. He doesn't seem like a murderer though. There's absolutely nothing cold-blooded about him.

Ig pulls on his jeans and makes his way through the studio apartment, kicking away the half-empty pizza boxes and beer bottles all over the floor. But there are nice curtains on the windows and flowers on the sill: until recently this was an extremely well-cared-for apartment.

Ig puts a record on the turntable: it's loud and dissonant punk rock. He closes his eyes for a moment and blocks everything out but the music. Then he opens his eyes again.

Ig yanks open his curtains to reveal a crowd of photographers and TV cameramen and protesters holding signs reading MURDERER just outside his window. Ig sighs wearily. The cigarette dangles from his lips. Ig gives them the finger.

EXT. IG PERRISH'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Ig comes stumbling out of the apartment carrying a couple bags of garbage. Immediately the reporters and photographers and protesters surround him, getting directly in his face.

REPORTER #1
Hey, Ig, what does it feel like to get away with murder?

IG
That's a question you should be asking yourselves.

Ig heads over to toss the garbage bags in the dumpster. He's deeply in pain so he's lashing out at the reporters.

REPORTER #2
We've heard reports that the police have a new witness. So how are you enjoying your last days of freedom?

Ig glares. He goes over to the carport and gets in his rusty old Gremlin. The protesters swarm around him, screaming.

PROTESTER #1
You should pray to God to save your soul for what you did to her!

IG
I should ask the Devil to punish whoever the fuck actually killed her.

And Ig puts the Gremlin in reverse and hits the gas. The reporters and protesters all jump out of the way as Ig pulls out of the carport and burns rubber down the road.

INT. O'HARA'S BAR - MORNING

Ig steps into the grimy dive bar. There are a few barflies sitting in the shadows drinking whiskey. AL O'HARA (50), the bar owner, shakes his head when he sees Ig.

O'HARA
Little early in the morning for you to start drinking, isn't it, Ig?

IG
They put me on leave down at the radio station - morning commuters don't like it when their DJ is a murder suspect.

O'HARA
Yeah, so maybe you should take your business elsewhere - no offense but you make the customers uncomfortable.

Ig turns to consider the barflies, who do indeed look askance at Ig. Ig looks a little bit outraged.

IG
You're actually saying that I make *these* guys uncomfortable?

GLENNA NICHOLSON (26) calls over from further down the bar. She's overweight with a bad dye job and too much makeup. She's young to be a barfly but that's exactly what she is.

GLENNA
I'm your best customer, Al, and I say Ig deserves a drink as much as anybody. *More* than anybody.

IG
Thanks, Glenna, I appreciate it, but you really don't need to--

GLENNA
If you don't let Ig stay, I'll make a scene, you'll have to kick me out.

O'HARA
You make a scene *every* day, Glenna. I *always* have to kick you out.

Ig polishes off his drink and gets up from the bar.

IG
It's all right. I'm better off drinking alone these days.

EXT. DERRICK & LYDIA PERRISH'S HOUSE - DAY

Ig's Gremlin pulls into the driveway of the tasteful New Hampshire house. The local news vans follow closely behind him. Ig hops out of the car and heads across the front lawn.

LYDIA PERRISH (60) opens the front door. She's impeccably dressed and very proper and utterly mortified by all this.

IG
Aren't you proud of me, Mom, I'm so famous, people follow me everywhere.

LYDIA
Come on inside, sweetie.

Quickly Lydia ushers Ig inside the house. She shoots a pained look at the news vans. Then she shuts the door.

INT. DERRICK & LYDIA PERRISH'S DINING ROOM - DAY

Ig sits at the dining room table in the middle of maybe the most uncomfortable family meal in the history of the world.

His father DERRICK PERRISH (65), tense and red-faced, sits at the head of the table. His brother TERRY PERRISH (28) looks down at his plate, not making eye contact with anyone.

DERRICK
You shouldn't talk to those reporters, son, they're only gonna take whatever you say and twist it around.

IG
But if I *don't* talk to them, it looks like I've got something to hide.

LYDIA
Don't talk to anybody but your lawyer.

DERRICK
How's Lee working out for you? You still think he's up to the job?

IG
Well, he's keeping me out of jail, at least for the time being, which is some kind of triumph.

DERRICK
I'm just saying, you don't need to settle for a public defender, I can find the money to hire a real lawyer--

IG
I've known Lee since we were kids. He's looking out for me. And I want all of you to go back to your normal lives. Terry, I don't want you to cancel any more studio gigs.

TERRY
But I want to stay close by, Iggy.

IG
I can take care of myself.

LYDIA
Ig, honey, nobody wants to hire Terry for studio gigs these days, there's too much of a scandal.

Ig looks to Terry for confirmation. Terry looks at his plate.

DERRICK
We're all in this together. We'll make sure you don't go to jail. Just don't talk to any more reporters. And don't admit to anything.

IG
I don't have anything to admit to.

LYDIA
We don't care what happened. You're our son. That's all that matters.

Ig rises angrily from the table. He's not sure if they even believe that he's innocent. This is infuriating to him.

IG
If you think for a second that I might've killed her - then why would you protect me? Because if I did anything to her then I'm a fucking monster.

INT. DERRICK PERRISH'S STUDIO - DAY

Ig comes into the music studio in the house. There are lots of photographs of Ig's father playing Las Vegas with Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald. And there are photos of Terry playing with Wynton Marsalis.

Ig looks at the room full of trumpets. Terry pokes his head into the room. Ig turns to him, deeply remorseful.

IG
You really aren't getting hired for studio jobs because of me?

TERRY
Don't worry about me. I've got plenty of money saved up. I can play live shows with the quintet for a while. That's more fun for me anyway.

IG
You can go overseas. Jazz musicians get more respect there anyway. Plus they haven't heard of me in Europe.

Terry fingers one of the trumpets gingerly.

TERRY
I wish we were still playing together like when we were kids.

IG
I could never play well enough to keep up with you and dad. Bad luck is all.

TERRY
Yeah, well, I wish I could carry some of your bad luck for you.

IG
Luck doesn't work that way. Play something for me, Terry.

And Terry puts his lips to the trumpet and starts blowing a sweet, pure sound. Ig closes his eyes and listens. It's the closest Ig can get to being at peace right now.

IG (CONT'D)
That's the music I want you to play at my funeral.

EXT. LEE TOURNEAU'S OFFICE - DAY

Ig's Gremlin pulls up to the small one-story office building. He's still being followed by the local news vans. Ig gets out of the car just as LEE TOURNEAU (26) opens the door.

Lee wears a suit. He's young and idealistic. He looks at Ig with genuine empathy. He gestures to the news vans.

LEE
I guess now you know what it's like to lead a parade.

IG
Now I know what it's like to join the circus.

INT. LEE TOURNEAU'S OFFICE - DAY

Lee sits at his desk in his small public defender's office. Ig sits in the chair across from him, tapping his feet.

IG
Thanks for keeping me out of jail for one more day at least.

LEE
Yeah, well, I'm trying to keep you out of jail forever. It's official, they recovered nothing from the fire at the lab in Concord so there's no DNA evidence tying you to the murder--

IG
Except unfortunately that means there's no DNA evidence tying anybody *else* to the murder either--

LEE
The tire imprint they found at the scene is a Goodyear and you've got Michelins on your Gremlin so that's good news too--

IG
Except everyone in town still thinks I'm the one who killed her.

LEE
I'll admit it's tricky to get around the fact that the cops say you confessed to the murder--

IG
You know I never confessed to anybody! They're just looking for any way to put me away for the rest of my life--

Ig is getting worked up but Lee is very patient with him.

LEE
I don't want to hear you talk like that. You're an innocent man.

IG
You sure you're not just saying that cause we've known each other so long?

LEE
Know how people say anybody's capable of murder in the right circumstances? Well, I think that's a load of bull. You've either got evil in you or you don't. It's not in you, Ig.

Ig swallows hard. He's deeply moved by Lee's faith. But he shakes his head, with a jagged surge of deep pain.

IG
You don't think I'm capable of murder? Just put me in a room with the guy who actually killed her.

Lee nods. He heaves a sigh and smiles sadly at Ig.

LEE
One thing I need to tell you. There's a candlelight vigil tonight in the woods where they found Merrin's body. So why not head home now, order in some food, hit the hay early, okay?

IG
Are you kidding? If they're lighting candles for Merrin, I'm gonna be there lighting a candle of my own.

LEE
Don't be an idiot, Ig, why the hell would you want to go out there?

Ig knows that Lee is giving him good advice but he also knows how much he loves and misses Merrin.

EXT. GIDEON WOODS - NIGHT

Hoodie pulled low over his forehead, hands buried deep in his pockets, Ig trudges quickly through the woods. He pulls out a flask from his pocket and takes a swig. He bobs and weaves: clearly he's already pretty drunk.

He heads toward a large tree in the middle of the woods. The bark on the tree looks like flayed, decaying flesh. There's a old treehouse high in the branches.

There are photographs of Merrin placed delicately in the lower branches, vases of pussy willows and wildflowers, Hallmark cards, decorative crosses with yellow nylon roses.

Ig looks up at the treehouse, thinking to himself. Then he makes a decision. He starts to climb the tree.

INT. TREEHOUSE - NIGHT

Ig looks around the treehouse. It's old and dingy. The floor has a little square of dusty carpet on it. Ig takes a swig from the flask and looks out the window.

A procession of mourners holding candles come walking through the woods toward the tree. Ig peers out the window, trying to keep to the shadows so nobody will see him up in the tree.

At the foot of the tree, DALE and HEIDI WILLIAMS (50s) stand holding hands. Heidi extends her arms to the crowd. She is a fragile woman in the throes of incomprehensible grief.

HEIDI
I wasn't sure I wanted to come here tonight: I didn't think I could handle it. You can understand, I haven't had any peace since my daughter died.

Ig peers down at Heidi from the treehouse window. Dale interrupts his wife, practically vibrating with rage.

DALE
Especially when Merrin's murderer is still walking the streets! There's no justice so long as he's free--

Ig seizes back. Heidi bursts into tears. Dale takes her in his arms and holds her. FATHER MOULD (60), the hearty, kindly priest, raises his hands to calm everyone down.

FATHER MOULD
Seeing all of you here tonight is a blessing - it's a state of grace. So let's bow our heads in prayer...

And Ig watches from his hiding place up in the treehouse as everyone in town bows their heads in prayer for Merrin. Ig bows his head with them as the breeze blows through the tree.

EXT. GIDEON WOODS - NIGHT

The last few mourners head off down the hill. The woods are quiet and empty once again.

Cautiously Ig emerges from his hiding place. He clambers down the tree as quietly and stealthily as possible. He considers the shrine that's been erected in Merrin's memory.

Impulsively Ig rips the cross down and stamps it into the dirt. In a rage, he kicks at the flowers, sending them flying into the air. He pulls down the Virgin Mary and breaks it in half. He opens his fly and urinates on the ground. He is completely beside himself with rage and pain.

Above him the sky is ominous and black. It's so dark, it's as though heaven can't even bear to look at him anymore.

Suddenly a hand reaches out of the darkness and grabs hold of Ig. It's Glenna. She puts her hand to her lips for Ig to be quiet.

GLENNA
Jesus Christ, Ig, what were you thinking, coming out here? What if somebody saw you?

IG
Where else could I go tonight?

GLENNA
For crying out loud, you smell like whiskey. My car's parked down the hill. I'm getting you out of here.

Ig starts to protest but he wobbles a little on his feet. He realizes that he is indeed quite drunk. And he rests his arms on Glenna's shoulders as they head down the hill.

INT. GLENNA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Ig is sleeping off his drunk, snoring. He snores so loudly that he wakes himself up. His head is half-buried under a pillow. He doesn't know where he is at first.

Then his eyes fall on a naked Glenna lying in bed next to him. He is overcome with remorse. He lets out a soft groan and pulls himself out of bed.

INT. GLENNA'S BATHROOM - MORNING

Ig steps out of the shower and towels himself off. He takes a leak and flushes the toilet.

Protruding from his forehead are a pair of small, knobby, pointed horns. We see them before he does: Ig is so hung over he doesn't quite focus on them just yet.

Then he looks up at himself in the mirror. He looks away and yawns. Then he looks back up at the horns again. This time he sees them. He takes a step back in shock.

Needless to say this is not what Ig expected to see at all. He rubs his eyes to try and make the vision go away.

The horns are still there. One of them has just poked through his flesh and the other one is still buried beneath the skin.

Ig reaches up to touch them. They're small and could be mistaken for pimples but for the very tips, which hook upward and are an ugly, inflamed red.

Ig gags, crouches over, and vomits into the toilet.

INT. GLENNA'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Ig stumbles into the living room. The TV is on, broadcasting a daytime talk show. Glenna sits on the couch, wearing a man's dress shirt and very little else, eating a breakfast of supermarket donuts and Diet Coke.

GLENNA
Are you still drunk?

IG
How do I look?

Glenna turns to look at Ig and lets out a harsh laugh.

GLENNA
Way better than you should.

IG
What I mean is, do you see anything, you know, unusual, about my...

GLENNA
You mean the horns?

IG
Oh shit - so you can see them too?

Ig looks panicked. But Glenna just stares blankly at him. She doesn't have any kind of reaction.

GLENNA
Can I have another donut? You think another donut would be okay?

IG
I don't know: why are you asking me?

GLENNA
I already ate one and I'm not even hungry anymore. I'd like to eat the whole box.

This is weirder than any morning-after conversation Ig has ever had. He touches the horns on his head. At this point he doesn't know if they're real or if he's hallucinating. He's also not sure which of the two options is worse.

IG
I need to go to the doctor.

GLENNA
I don't even want to use my hands. I just want to stick my face in the box and start eating. Would that be okay?

IG
If you want. Knock yourself out.

And Glenna looks up at Ig, just as the second horn starts to break through his skin. She nods at him gratefully.

GLENNA
Great. Thanks.

Glenna takes a donut from the box and shoves one chunk after another into her mouth without swallowing. She gags softly. Then she inhales deeply through her nostrils and begins to swallow. Ig watches her, his mouth slack with astonishment.

GLENNA (CONT'D)
I didn't even like it. My stomach hurts. Should I eat another one?

IG
Why would you eat another one if your stomach hurts?

GLENNA
I want to get really fat. Why shouldn't I? I'm worthless anyway. Everybody in this town thinks I'm trash. Guys will only sleep with me when they're totally wasted.

IG
That's not true, Glenna, I mean...

But Ig trails off, realizing that the current circumstances don't really allow him to make any kind of decent argument.

GLENNA
Oh, please. *You* never would've screwed me if you weren't blind drunk. I feel so bad about what you're going through and what people say about you, but I could tell you didn't care about me one bit. You were thinking of Merrin the whole time.

IG
I'm sorry, Glenna, I didn't mean to - I've got no excuse for last night--

Glenna isn't even really listening to Ig. She leans over the box of donuts again, her expression eager.

GLENNA
You think it would be all right for me to eat the rest of these?

IG
Do whatever you want.

She grins. She takes the box in her hands and shoves her face in it. She makes loud noises while she chews. Ig slowly inches toward the front door.

Glenna gags again, her shoulders hitching. But she keeps right on eating, using her free hand to push more donut into her mouth, even though her cheeks are already swollen.

GLENNA
Mmm. Mmm.

A fly buzzes around Glenna's head and lands at the corner of her mouth. Glenna's tongue darts out and she pulls the fly into her mouth. She swallows the fly with the donut.

IG
You know what, Glenna, I think I'll just be taking off now.

And Ig gets himself out the door as Glenna lowers her face into the donut box again.

EXT. GIDEON HOSPITAL - DAY

Ig pulls his Gremlin to a halt in the parking lot and gets out. He checks his reflection in the side-view mirror.

It looks like the horns have already gotten a little larger and longer. Ig takes his baseball cap out of his pocket and shoves it down over his forehead as he heads inside.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY

Ig steps into the very crowded waiting room. A LITTLE GIRL lies on her back on the carpet, producing great howling sobs. Her YOUNG MOTHER is bent over her, whispering angrily. Everyone else in the waiting room is suffering in silence. Ig heads over to the sweet-faced RECEPTIONIST.

RECEPTIONIST
What can I do you for?

IG
I need a doctor to look at something.

Ig pulls off his baseball cap and gestures to the horns, half-hoping the Receptionist can see them and half-hoping she can't. The Receptionist looks right at them but her response is chipper and matter-of-fact.

RECEPTIONIST
Well, that sure doesn't look right. I'll need you to fill out some forms.

The Receptionist hands Ig a clipboard and a pen. Across the room, the Little Girl shrieks even louder than before and bashes her mother in the knee with a toy fire truck. The Receptionist leans in and speaks confidentially to Ig.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)
I want to tell her to shut that miserable brat up. What do you think?

The Receptionist seems to be genuinely asking Ig's opinion. Ig doesn't quite know how to respond.

IG
I'll just go fill these out.

Ig looks for a chair. The only two available seats are on either side of the Young Mother. The Little Girl screams.

Ig sits down next to the Young Mother and starts to fill out the form, trying very hard to concentrate. After a moment, the Young Mother leans over to speak to Ig.

YOUNG MOTHER
For what it's worth, I'd love to kick my daughter right in her spoiled ass. Do you think I should?

IG
No, I don't. Of course I don't. Why would you even ask me that?

YOUNG MOTHER
You're right. I guess I can't do that. Then maybe I ought to just leave her here and drive away. I could divorce my husband, drink gin, and fuck my nigger golf pro.

Ig stares at the Young Mother in offended astonishment.

IG
Excuse me?

YOUNG MOTHER
I've never been with a jigaboo before. You know how most of them are. But it's true what they say about black dicks. We call it the five-iron. I should just run off with him. My husband would get me on abandonment, but who cares? Would you want partial custody of *that*?

Alarmed, Ig jumps up and walks over to the Receptionist. He hands her the clipboard. The Receptionist leans in to him.

RECEPTIONIST
I feel like I *have* to yell at that girl's mother. I know it's not her fault that her daughter is a screechy puke, but really now.

The Receptionist smiles at Ig hopefully. Ig realizes she's asking him for permission. He hesitates a moment. Then, out of curiosity more than anything else, he shrugs.

IG
Sure. Go ahead. Why not?

The Receptionist smiles at him gratefully. She stands and glances past him, at the Young Mother and the Little Girl.

RECEPTIONIST
Ma'am? Do you think you could show some fucking consideration and take your daughter outside where we won't all have to listen to her screaming?

The Receptionist smiles placidly. The color drains from the Young Mother's face. Ig looks back and forth between them.

YOUNG MOTHER
What the hell did you just say?

RECEPTIONIST
I said you should take that shrieking pig of yours by the hair and drag her the fuck out of here--

YOUNG MOTHER
Fuck you! Shove it up your ass! You dried-up old twat!

The Young Mother lets go of her daughter's hand. She throws down her purse and screams at the Receptionist. The Receptionist hollers shrilly back. Everyone in the waiting room starts screaming at each other at the top of their lungs.

IG
Come on, everybody, you don't want to do this in front of your kids--

Ig rises from his chair to try and keep the peace. He takes a gentle but firm hold on the Young Mother. But she grabs hold of Ig's neck in anger. And to steady himself, he puts his hand on her heart...

AND ALL OF A SUDDEN IT'S LIKE IG CAN SEE HER WHOLE LIFE. In flashes we see her wedding to a much older man, and then she and her husband getting golf lessons, and the golf pro smiles seductively at her as he shows her the correct stance, and all of a sudden we smash cut to her in bed with the golf pro having wild, dirty sex, and then we cut to her daughter in hysterics, dumping her breakfast into her mother's lap...

And suddenly, as Ig pulls his hand away from the woman's heart, we are wrenched back to reality. Ig is stunned. And he's more than a little amazed by the conflagration that he's seemingly ignited. He looks down at the Little Girl. In the commotion she's stopped screaming. She looks at Ig.

LITTLE GIRL
I hate Mommy. I want to burn her in her bed with matches. I want to burn her all up gone.

Ig stares at her. He has absolutely no response for this.

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Ig sits on the examination table, stripped to the waist. The NURSE straps the blood-pressure gauge to his arm.

NURSE
You know how this works, right? It's just a little pressure.

IG
After what I've been through lately, I can handle a little pressure.

Ig laughs hollowly at his weak joke. The Nurse smiles very pleasantly at him as she checks his blood pressure.

NURSE
You're the fellow who murdered his girlfriend, aren't you? I've seen your picture in the Sentinel.

IG
Actually I *didn't* kill her, no matter what the Sentinel says--

NURSE
My boyfriend is seeing this girl on the side. She works at Bradlees and she drives a yellow Saab. On my lunch break today I'm thinking I should go over to the Bradlees parking lot and key that Saab. Put a big long scratch in it. Then maybe leave dog shit on the driver's seat. How about that?

Ig is starting to figure out exactly what's going on here. The Nurse has kept right on pumping the blood pressure gauge.

IG
You think maybe you want to stop pumping the gauge over there?

The Nurse nods and smiles as she pulls the band off Ig's arm. The DOCTOR comes into the room and nods to them both.

DOCTOR
Ig Perrish. Long time no see. So what brought you here this morning?

The Nurse leaves the room. Ig leans in to the Doctor.

IG
Can you see anything wrong with me?

DOCTOR
You mean besides your horns?

IG
No, well, yes, that's what I mean.

DOCTOR
I'm concerned they might be pre-cancerous tumors. We should do a biopsy and see if they're malignant. They look inflamed. Do they hurt?

IG
Like hell.

The Doctor barks out a laugh. He gets some measuring tape from the cabinet and measures the horns.

DOCTOR
Let me see now. You know how I think we should proceed?

IG
How?

The Doctor finishes measuring the horns and steps back. He puts his hand to his chin and furrows his brow thoughtfully.

DOCTOR
We should grind up some OxyContin and have a little snort. I promised myself I'd never snort any at work, because it makes me stupid, but I don't think I can wait six more hours.

IG
(utterly exasperated)
For Christ's sake, how about we deal with these things on my head?

DOCTOR
Fucking patients. All you care about is yourselves.

IG
Listen, Doctor - just saw the goddamn horns off.

The Doctor considers this. Then he grins.

INT. OPERATING ROOM - DAY

Ig lies on the operating table. The Doctor and the Nurse stand over him. The Doctor puts on gloves and arranges his surgical tools on a tray. The Nurse holds up a mask.

NURSE
Now just breathe normally.

The Nurse places the mask over Ig's face. The Doctor picks up a surgical saw. Ig suddenly looks panicked. He tries to speak but his voice is muffled beneath the mask.

IG
Are you sure this is gonna work?

DOCTOR
Not at all, actually, but it'll definitely be fun to try it.

Ig starts to protest but the gas kicks in and he goes out like a light. His eyelids flutter as the world flashes in and out of focus. And now it's as though we're moving inside Ig's drugged brain, into his memory, as images of his past start flashing before his eyes...

INT. SACRED HEART OF MARY CHURCH - MORNING

And now the flashes of light are still causing Ig's eyes to flutter, only we've gone back into the past, and a 13-year-old Ig sitting in church with his family.

The congregation is singing the recessional hymn. But something is flashing in Ig's eyes - he doesn't know what.

Derrick and Lydia are standing at attention in their Sunday finest. Terry sits next to Ig, looking at vintage nudie postcards tucked into the pages of his hymnal, grinning. The 13-year-old Lee Tourneau sits behind Ig with his mother.

The flashes of golden light are at the periphery of Ig's vision. Ig glances around for the source of the light.

Then he hears a muffled laugh coming from a few pews behind him, on the opposite side of the aisle. He turns to see a very pretty redheaded girl about his age. She sits with her family. Her name is MERRIN WILLIAMS.

Merrin fingers a delicate gold cross around her throat. She rotates the cross into the sunlight. She flashes the cross in his eyes, two short bursts and then one long burst. Ig mouths a whisper back toward Merrin.

IG AT 13
What are you doing?

Ig's father Derrick leans down and claps Ig on the shoulder.

DERRICK
I think it's Morse code. That girl is telling you: "Stop looking at my legs or I'll give you a black eye."

TERRY AT 15
You've got no chance with her, Ig.

Ig's mother thumps him lightly on the back of his head with her hymnal. Ig turns to face front and sing the hymn. But he keeps throwing glances back at the girl with the cross.

Merrin starts to flash Ig with the cross again, but the gold chain comes loose and spills into her hand. She bows her head and tries to fix the cross, frowning a little.

The recessional passes down the aisle, between Ig and Merrin, blocking her from his sight.

INT. SACRED HEART OF MARY CHURCH - LATER

After the recessional, Ig starts quickly down the aisle, trying to catch up with Merrin. But her family is too far ahead of him and they disappear out the door.

Ig looks down at the pew where Merrin was sitting. The broken gold cross lies atop its chain, in a square of light.

Eagerly Ig picks up the cross and makes his way down the aisle, looking for Merrin so he can return it to her. But when he reaches the door and looks outside, the girl and her family have vanished: they're nowhere to be found.

EXT. KNOWLES ROAD - DAY

Ig and Lee head down the street after church, pulling at their ties, scratching at their starched collars.

IG AT 13
I think she was doing Morse code. I think she was sending me a message.

LEE AT 13
I can fix her cross if you want. Do you want to come over to my house?

INT. TOURNEAU GARAGE - DAY

Ig watches as Lee uses pliers to tighten up the rings on the chain so he can reattach the cross. It's precision work and Lee is very good at it. He hands the cross back to Ig.

LEE AT 13
Now you can give it back to her next Sunday. She'll be really impressed.

Ig holds the cross in his hand and considers it closely.

IG AT 13
Thanks a lot, Lee. You really know how to fix things. You should become mechanic or something.

LEE AT 13
No. I want to be a lawyer.

IG AT 13
You do? Really? I don't know anybody else who wants to be a lawyer.

LEE AT 13
I want to, you know, put people in jail who do bad things. Murderers and rapists and bitches who do drugs and have kids they don't take care of. I want to make the world safe for the good people. You know?

Lee is speaking with surprising force. Ig opens his mouth to respond just as Lee's mother calls out to him drunkenly from inside the house.

MRS. TOURNEAU (O.S.)
Lee! Come in here, you little prick! I need you to do something for me!

Lee shoots an angry glance in the direction of his mother's voice. Then he turns back to Ig and shrugs his shoulders.

LEE AT 13
I'll see you in school tomorrow.

And Lee turns and inside his house. Ig stares after him, clutching the fixed cross.

INT. SACRED HEART OF MARY CHURCH - DAY

Once again Ig sits in the pew with his family singing the recessional hymn. Merrin sits with her family a few rows back. Ig sneaks glances at her. He holds the cross.

He finds some sunshine and points the cross at her. Light flashes in her eyes. She looks at him. She grins.

INT. SACRED HEART OF MARY CHURCH - DAY

After the service, Ig comes into the church, looking around for Merrin. She is alone, lighting a candle. Ig gulps: this is the moment. He heads over to her. She smiles.

MERRIN AT 13
You fixed my cross.

IG AT 13
Actually, um, my friend Lee did it.

Ig gestures to Lee, who hovers in the doorway, watching shyly and curiously. When Lee sees them looking at him, he ducks out. Merrin takes the cross and puts it around her neck.

MERRIN AT 13
Oh. Well. Tell him I said thanks.

IG AT 13
Um. Hey. When you were, you know, flashing the cross in my eyes, were you - I mean, what were you...

MERRIN AT 13
Just seeing how long before you figured out where the light was coming from. Why? Did you think I was sending you a message or something?

Ig flushes red. He doesn't know what to say for a moment.

IG AT 13
Oh. Okay. That makes sense. So. Who are you lighting a candle for?

MERRIN AT 13
My sister.

IG AT 13
You have a sister?

MERRIN AT 13
Not anymore. Well. Anyway. Thanks for fixing my cross. Or getting your friend to fix my cross.

Merrin heads out of the church. Ig follows after her. He is instantly and completely in love with her.

EXT. GIDEON WOODS - DAY

Ig and Merrin walk down the dirt trail in the middle of the woods. It's a beautiful spring day and the light dapples through the trees.

IG AT 13
So, um, how come I never saw you in church before last week?

MERRIN AT 13
We just moved to Gideon. My parents were really depressed after my sister died, and my mom grew up here, so...

Merrin trails off. This is clearly a painful topic. Ig doesn't want to pry but he really wants to be her friend.

IG AT 13
Can I ask - how did she - I mean...

MERRIN AT 13
She had cancer. They cut all these pieces off of her and she was in so much pain, it made her go crazy, and then she died anyway. Is it okay if we don't talk about it anymore?

IG AT 13
Okay. Um. So. You want to go with me to the foundry and watch my brother and his friends blow stuff up?

Merrin stares incredulously at Ig.

MERRIN AT 13
What?

And as the MUSIC bumps up...

EXT. GIDEON FOUNDRY - DAY

...We see a quick montage of more and more exciting things being blown up by cherry bombs.

First: a cherry bomb in a trash can.

Next: a large Barbie doll. A blackened foot falls to the ground and lands in the dirt.

Then: an old tire rolls down the hill with a bomb taped inside it. The tire explodes into pieces that rain from the air.

A watermelon is pulverized into red and green chunks.

Finally: a giant frozen turkey is deposited in a hollowed-out tree trunk. The other kids gather around the turkey.

There's Terry. There's the 13-year-old version of Glenna, already pudgy, with acne, wearing low-riding jeans. And there's a mean, tough kid named ERIC HANNITY (15).

And standing off to one side are Ig and Merrin. Lee is skateboarding nearby and he stops to watch them. Eric takes a cherry bomb out of his pocket. He grins at the other kids.

ERIC AT 15
You'll want to find cover or else you'll all be wearing turkey dinner.

Eric puts his foot on the edge of the stump and produces a lighter from his pocket. He ignites the fuse. It spits white sparks. Eric and Terry back away slowly. Ig and Merrin watch closely. Merrin sticks her fingers in her ears.

The fuse makes a sizzling sound. Then it stops. Nothing.

TERRY AT 15
Shit. Maybe it got wet.

ERIC AT 15
Hang on. Sometimes it--

And the turkey explodes with a shattering CRACK. Smoking chunks of wood from the tree stump whirl through the air. Bones and meat drizzle down from the sky on all the kids.

Hoots and hollers and applause from all the kids gathered at the foundry. Eric and Terry are completely exhilarated. Ig watches Merrin, happy to be part of the excitement.

TERRY AT 15
What are we gonna blow up next?

GLENNA AT 13
You could put a cherry bomb in one of my baby sister's diapers.

ERIC AT 15
Only if she's wearing it. Hey, what if one of you homos climbs in that shopping cart and rides it down from the top of the hill totally naked?

Everyone looks up at the hill. It's very steep and the way down is full of jagged rocks. And at the base of the hill is the river. Nobody is foolish enough to volunteer. But Ig sees his chance to impress Merrin.

IG AT 13
I'll do it.

Terry and Eric and Glenna turn to look at Ig. Glenna is impressed. Terry is astonished. Eric grins devilishly.

GLENNA AT 13
Are you for real?

TERRY AT 15
Dude, I'm not letting you. What am I gonna tell Mom when you flay all the skin off your scrawny white ass?

ERIC AT 15
Let him go if he wants to. It's no skin off your back. Off his, probably, but not yours.

LEE AT 13
You don't have a prayer of making it down the hill in this thing, Ig.

MERRIN AT 13
You don't need to do this.

Merrin looks very upset. Ig looks back at the kids. There's no backing out now.

IG AT 13
I'm going to make it.

EXT. FOUNDRY HILL - LATER

As all the other kids watch him from down below, Ig pushes the shopping cart up the hill. He looks down at the other kids far below him and at the river stretching out ahead.

He can see there are two pipes running along the ground. If he can get the cart between the pipes, he has half a chance. He knows this is crazy but it's too late to back out now.

ERIC AT 15
Hey, Ig, you weird little fuck, what's the point of being shy now?

Glenna hoots and hollers. Terry looks mortified. Merrin and Lee watch him closely. Defiantly Ig strips down to his underwear. He looks down the hill at the river.

Ig steps onto the back of the cart. He takes a deep breath. Then he pushes off.

The shopping cart goes faster and faster down the hill. Ig stands on the back, keeping the wheels as steady as possible. The river rushes at him from below. The other kids watch.

The cart hits a rock at the bottom of the hill and Ig is flung into the air. He is propelled into the sky.

Then he plunges into the river and gets swallowed up.

EXT. KNOWLES RIVER - DAY

Ig is unconscious and underwater, sinking like a stone. Then suddenly Lee is in the water next to him, wrapping his arms around him, bringing him up to the surface.

On the shore, Lee leans over Ig, doing mouth-to-mouth on him. Lee pumps Ig's chest: he isn't responding. Lee is looking more and more panicked.

Then suddenly Ig coughs and spits up water from his mouth.

LEE AT 13
I thought you were dead. You looked a little dead. You weren't breathing.

Ig coughs and gasps some more, lying in the mud. Terry and Eric and Glenna and Merrin come running over.

ERIC AT 15
You really are a crazy person, you know that? Hey, Terry, your brother here is a total fucking lunatic.

There are cuts and bruises all over Ig's face and body. Merrin looks like she's near tears.

TERRY AT 15
You're an idiot. What an idiot. If Lee hadn't been here to pull you out--

LEE AT 13
It was nothing. Anybody would've--

IG AT 13
You saved me? Lee. You saved me.

ERIC AT 15
Did you do mouth to mouth?

TERRY AT 15
When we get home we're telling Mom and Dad you fell out of a tree, okay?

Ig nods at Terry, coughing and spitting. But Glenna explodes in anger on Ig's behalf.

GLENNA AT 13
Shit, Terry, you act like you're all tough, but you're scared of getting in trouble with your mommy and daddy--

TERRY AT 15
What are you talking about, I'm not--

GLENNA AT 13
Ig almost died and all you're thinking about is how to save your own skin--

IG AT 13
It's okay, Glenna, I'm fine, and it's all thanks to Lee--

Ig looks at Lee with gratitude. Then he turns to Merrin.

MERRIN AT 13
You could've killed yourself. Why did you do that? You could've *died*!

Merrin bursts into tears. She runs off down the road. Ig stares after her. With great effort, he rises to his feet.

EXT. GIDEON WOODS - DAY

Ig throws on his clothes as he runs to catch up with Merrin, who is striding angrily through the woods.

IG AT 13
Hey! Hey! I'm sorry! I didn't mean to scare you!

MERRIN AT 13
Why would you do something like that? Do you want to get yourself killed?

IG AT 13
No - of course not - I'm fine - see?

But Ig understands that Merrin is crying more for her lost sister than she is for him. She whirls on Ig in fury.

MERRIN AT 13
You're so stupid - you don't know how easy it is to die!

Ig is suddenly seized by a wave of sympathy and love. He leans in and impulsively kisses Merrin on the mouth. She hesitates for a moment, and then gives in to the kiss. She wraps her arms around Ig and kisses him back.

Through the branches Lee can be seen watching them embrace and kiss each other. He allows a complicated smile to cross his face. Then he turns and heads away from them.

EXT. GIDEON WOODS - DAY

It's autumn now. Ig and Merrin walk through the woods together holding hands, in the deepest first flush of love.

The tree house stands fifteen feet off the ground. Low branches lead up to the trap door. Of course we can recognize this treehouse but it's clearly the first time that Ig has ever seen it.

IG AT 13
What's this?

MERRIN AT 13
Come on. I'll show you.

And Merrin starts to climb up the branches into the treehouse. Ig hesitates a moment, and then follows after her.

INT. TREEHOUSE - DAY

Ig and Merrin step into the treehouse. Ig looks around the place in astonishment.

IG AT 13
How did you find this place?

MERRIN AT 13
I was just walking through the woods one day. It's where I go when I don't want anybody to find me.

IG AT 13
But now I know about it. So now I'll always know where to find you.

And Merrin smiles at him tenderly. Ig leans in and kisses Merrin on the lips. She kisses him back...

...And the MUSIC bumps up: "I Want You" by the Beatles. And we stay in the treehouse but we move through time as Ig and Merrin grow up together...

We see them at 15, as Ig undresses Merrin, and they start to make love for the first time. And we see them at 18, post-coital, lying in each other's arms on top of a sleeping bag on the treehouse floor in the middle of the night...

EXT. GIDEON WOODS - DAY

And the MUSIC fades. Ig and Merrin are walking in the woods. More than a decade has gone by: they are 26 years old. Ig is beaming at Merrin. It's starting to rain a little bit.

IG
So what are we gonna name the kids?

MERRIN
What kids are you talking about?

IG
The kids we're gonna have someday.

MERRIN
You're real confident about all this.

IG
Theoretically speaking I'm interested in the hypothetical kids we're gonna have in the unforeseeable future.

Merrin is doing her best to keep the conversation light. She wraps her arms around Ig and kisses him on the neck.

MERRIN
Hey, listen, you have to stop worrying about the future so much. You need to let things happen to you.

IG
Well, I'd like *you* to be the one of the things that's happening to *me*. And *I'd* like to be one of the things that's happening to *you*.

Ig wraps his arms around Merrin and kisses her on the mouth. Merrin kisses him back. They walk deeper into the woods. It's starting to rain harder. They break into a run.

EXT. KNOWLES BRIDGE - DAY

The rain is coming down harder and harder. Ig and Merrin take shelter under the bridge just by the edge of the river.

Merrin picks up an old newspaper from the ground. She starts to fold it into an unusual shape.

IG
What are you doing with that?

MERRIN
You haven't ever made a boat out of a newspaper before?

IG
I can't think of a time when I've ever had a reason to do that.

And Merrin finishes folding the newspaper into a boat. She holds it out to Ig with pride.

MERRIN
I think we should do something inspiring with it.

Ig considers for a moment. He looks down on the ground. Among the trash is a half-empty box of birthday candles. He pulls the birthday candles from the ground and grins.

EXT. KNOWLES RIVER - DAY

Ig and Merrin stand on the edge of the river, the rain pouring down on them. Ig tucks a candle into the folds of the boat made out of newspaper. Then he pulls his lighter out of his pocket and lights the candle. He hands the boat to Merrin.

Merrin puts the boat in the water. The current starts to carry the boat out into the river in the rain. Merrin extends her arms to the air in triumph.

MERRIN
Merrin Williams and Iggy Perrish, making the world a better place, one paper ship at a time!

Ig wraps his arms around Merrin and kisses her. They watch as the paper ship sails downstream in the pouring rain.

INT. JEWELRY STORE - DAY

Ig stands at the jewelry counter with Terry (28) and Lee (26), showing them a really opulent diamond ring.

IG
What do you think of this one?

TERRY
I'm flush from the tour, Ig, let me help you pay for the ring.

LEE
Merrin's never gonna go for it, it's too fancy for her.

The three of them wander down the aisles of the jewelry store.

IG
After I propose to her tonight, I want you guys to come by the restaurant and surprise her. And then we can all go out together.

TERRY
I've got some E. You want me to bring it along for all of us?

IG
Hopefully me and Merrin will be happy enough that we won't need stimulants.

TERRY
I'm a jazz musician - we *always* need stimulants.

LEE
Yeah, but I'm a state employee, so I'm subject to random drug tests.

IG
Come on, guys - what kind of ring do you think I should get her?

LEE
How about a plain gold band? Then you can get one for yourself too.

Lee points out two matching gold bands. Ig looks at them, considering. A grin slowly starts to cross his face.

IG
You always know exactly how to fix everything, don't you, Lee?

INT. THE PIT BAR & GRILL - NIGHT

Ig comes through the front door of the crowded and noisy restaurant. He checks the jewelry box with the two gold bands cupped in his hand. He stuffs the box in his pocket.

He sees Merrin sitting alone at a corner booth. There's a drink in front of her. She looks distraught. He goes over to her and sits down across from her.

IG
Is everything all right?

MERRIN
Look. Um. I don't know how to say this so I'm just gonna say it. I'm moving down to Boston.

IG
I don't understand.

MERRIN
I think we should break up.

Ig is completely floored by this. Merrin looks deeply upset. VERONICA (30), the bleached-blonde waitress, comes by, all smiles and cleavage, to take their order.

VERONICA
Hey, lovebirds: ready to order?

MERRIN
We haven't made up our minds yet.

Veronica heads off. Ig's eyes are locked on Merrin.

IG
I thought everything was going fine.

MERRIN
It's just, we've never had a chance to be apart from each other. We've been going out since high school. I've never had a chance to think about what I want for my life.

Ig can't believe what he's hearing. It takes him a moment to get his bearings. Merrin's face is completely pale.

IG
I know what *I* want. I want the life we've spent years dreaming about.

MERRIN
That's part of the problem. You act like we already *have* kids, like we're already married. Because you live in your head, not in the world. I'm not sure I ever even *wanted* kids.

IG
Well, it sounded like you were into the idea the last eight thousand times we talked about it--

Ig has raised his voice sharply. The restaurant has gotten quiet around them. Everyone is watching them fight.

MERRIN
How many girls have you been with? In your whole life?

IG
You know the answer to that.

MERRIN
Just me. And no one does that. Not these days. Nobody on the planet. You need to see other people before you can really decide if you want to be with me--

As Ig listens to Merrin, his eyes narrow into slits. He suddenly understands what Merrin is driving at.

IG
But I don't *want* to see other people. Is that what *you* want?

MERRIN
(with great effort)
I'm not in love with you anymore.

Merrin's eyes water over. As far as Ig is concerned, he has his answer. He goes white with rage.

IG
What's this really about? Is there some other guy? Is that it?

MERRIN
Ig, don't do this, please.

IG
You have to tell me the truth. You owe me that after all we've--

MERRIN
Look, if I've been keeping things from you...it's because you're a good person. You deserve better.

IG
So there *is* someone else. Tell me the truth!

And Merrin's face slowly crumples into sobs.

MERRIN
Yes! All right? I didn't want to... There's someone I've...I've been out with. Once or twice.

IG
Who is he?

MERRIN
It doesn't matter who he is. It's not important. It's not what I--

IG
How far has it gone? Have you already fucked him?

Merrin rises to her feet. She's crying full out now. Ig grabs hold of her arm in fury. The attention of the entire restaurant is focused on them now.

MERRIN
Let go of my arm.

IG
We're not done talking about this. There's a lot you're not telling me.

Merrin breaks away from Ig and runs off to the bathroom. Ig stares after her, then turns to the other restaurant patrons.

IG (CONT'D)
What the hell are you looking at?

The burly MANAGER comes over and taps Ig on the shoulder.

MANAGER
Sir. We're going to have to ask you and your wife to leave.

IG
She's not my wife. She's just someone I used to fuck.

Ig pulls two twenties out of his wallet and throws them down on the table. He storms out of the restaurant.

EXT. THE PIT BAR & GRILL - NIGHT

Ig comes out the door. It's raining cats and dogs outside. Terry is running inside, coat over his head.

TERRY
Hey, Iggy, how'd it go, did you already propose--

IG
Party's over, Terry. Go home.

Terry stares quizzically as Ig gets in his Gremlin. He pulls into reverse so fast that he backs right into a telephone pole. Terry runs over and pounds on Ig's hood.

TERRY
Ig - come on!

Ig swerves the car. Terry has to jump out of the way. Ig pulls out of the parking lot just as Merrin comes out of the restaurant. She hugs herself, standing in the rain next to Terry. She stares at Ig miserably. Ig puts his foot on the gas and hightails it onto the highway.

EXT. DUNKIN DONUTS - MORNING

Ig lies asleep in his car in the parking lot behind the Dunkin Donuts. An empty bottle of Jack Daniels sits in the passenger seat next to him, along with the jewelry box with its two gold rings. Ig is snoring loudly.

All of a sudden there's a knock on the window. Ig bolts up. Two policemen stand there looking at him. One of them is ERIC HANNITY (28) who unsurprisingly grew up to be a cop. His right-hand man is a lug named WALLACE STURTZ (26).

HANNITY
Good morning, Ig. Can you roll down your window so we can talk? When was the last time you saw Merrin?

The gravity on Hannity's face makes Ig seize up.

IG
What happened to her, Eric?

STURTZ
What makes you think something happened to her?

IG
(more and more panicked)
It's all my fault. Anything that happened to her. It's all my fault.

Hannity and Sturtz exchange a loaded glance. As far as they're concerned they've just gotten their confession.

HANNITY
Why don't you come down to the station and we can talk about it there?

IG
What the hell have I done?

And a dazed Ig allows Hannity and Sturtz to guide him out of the truck and over to their cruiser...

And all of a sudden we see the crime scene photos in a series of FLASHES. Merrin's arm all covered with dirt. Her

disheveled red hair. Her bloody clothes. Her eyes, devoid of life. It's all Ig can remember from the last month of his life. The flashes get faster and faster, the images going by in a quick blur, almost too fast to register...

INT. OPERATING ROOM - DAY

...and Ig bolts awake with a start. We're back in the present. The flashes are now coming from the light on the ceiling as Ig blinks back into consciousness.

The surgical saw is stuck to one of the horns on Ig's head, in the middle of slicing through. Ig looks up at the surgical saw and lets out a yelp.

IG
What the hell is going on here?

Ig turns to see the Doctor and the Nurse. They are half-naked, leaned up against the wall of the operating room, having sex. The Doctor is taking hits of the gas.

DOCTOR
Oh, right, I was going to operate, but then I sort of got distracted.

NURSE
We asked you if we could have sex instead and you said it was okay.

It takes Ig a second to wrap his brain around this.

IG
How could I possibly say that it was okay? I was under anesthesia!

NURSE
You sort of nodded your head so we assumed you thought it was okay.

IG
I still have these horns! Plus now there's a surgical saw stuck to my goddamn head!

The Doctor and the Nurse resume having sex, leaned up against the wall of the operating room. Ig looks at himself in the wall mirror, the surgical saw stuck to his horn. It may be his imagination but the horns seem to have gotten longer.

He takes a deep breath. Then with one swift motion he yanks the saw out of his horn. He bites his lip to keep from crying out in pain. The horn starts to bleed a little but it doesn't look like it's budged at all.

Ig grabs a band-aid from the medicine cabinet and applies it to the wound on his horn. It's a child's Smurf band-aid.

And Ig darts quickly out of the room, averting his eyes, just as the Doctor and the Nurse start to climax.

INT. IG'S GREMLIN - DAY

Ig speeds down the street away from the clinic. He checks himself in the side-view mirror again: he's a man with horns on his head who's wearing a Smurf bandage.

He picks up the baseball cap and tries to put it on but the horns have gotten too big: the cap won't fit anymore.

INT. LEE TOURNEAU'S OFFICE - DAY

And Ig comes barreling into Lee's office like a bat out of hell. Lee nearly spills coffee on himself.

IG
You've got to help me, Lee - I think everybody in town is going crazy.

LEE
In my opinion everybody in this town has pretty much *always* been crazy--

IG
People keep doing terrible things around me - they're telling me all the bad things they did and all the bad things they *want* to do--

LEE
Why would everybody do that?

IG
Because of these goddamn horns!

Ig points to the horns on the top of his head. Lee just stares blankly at Ig, completely at a loss.

LEE
What horns?

Now Ig stops short and actually listens to what Lee is saying.

IG
Can't you see them?

LEE
See what?

IG
The horns! *These* horns! Oh fuck! You *can't* see them! Can you?

Ig's mind is working a mile a minute to try and figure out what's going on. Lee speaks as soothingly as possible.

LEE
Listen, Ig, I know you've been under an inhuman amount of stress lately.

IG
Maybe the horns don't work on good people. And you're so decent, Lee, maybe you've got nothing to confess.

Ig's logic makes perfect sense to him. But from Lee's perspective, Ig is raving like a madman.

LEE
I can believe you *think* people see the devil when they look at you. Because unfortunately that's how a lot of people in this town see you.

IG
Only now people *literally* see me as the devil because that's what I *literally* am.

LEE
And you probably haven't slept in days. So maybe you're seeing things that aren't real.

Lee is trying to calm Ig down but he's only working Ig up.

IG
So you think I'm going crazy?

LEE
That's not what I meant.

IG
And if I'm crazy enough to imagine horns growing out of my head...then maybe I'm so crazy I got so drunk I blacked out and killed Merrin and then I forgot all about it. Right?

This is a new thought and it's really upsetting to Ig. Lee doesn't quite know how to respond to it either.

LEE
I don't like it when you say things like that.

IG
But if I'm this crazy, then who knows what I'm capable of? Right?

Neither Ig nor Lee knows what to say for a moment. Finally Lee leans over and speaks to Ig with a deep compassion.

LEE
Why don't you go home to your folks? Let them take care of you.

Ig nods. He leans across the desk and shakes Lee's hand, knocking over some papers. Then he bolts out of the room. Lee stares after Ig and taps his fingers on the desk.

INT. IG'S GREMLIN - DAY

Ig drives down the street, trying to stay calm and breathe normally. Maybe Lee was right and the horns are just a hallucination. He drums his hands on the wheel, relieved, feeling a whole lot lighter all of a sudden.

INT. DERRICK & LYDIA PERRISH'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ig comes into the house, more than a little worked up. His mother Lydia is tidying up the room. She looks up at him.

LYDIA
I didn't know you were coming over.

IG
I didn't know where else to go. I've been having a hell of a day. Something awful is happening to me.

Ig's voice is cracking. He goes to his mother and embraces her. She puts her arms around Ig and holds him tightly. Finally she lets go of him and smiles sadly at him.

LYDIA
Oh, sweetie, why couldn't you have gone somewhere else?

IG
What do you mean?

LYDIA
I don't want to hear about all your problems. I don't want to know. When you talk, I want to sing.

She claps her hands over her ears and sings loudly.

LYDIA (CONT'D)
La-la-la-la! I want to hold my breath until you go away.

Lydia crouches down with her hands over her ears and her mouth squeezed tight. She's really holding her breath. Her face is starting to turn a little blue. Ig leans down to her and shakes her by the shoulders.

IG
Mom! Stop it! Don't suffocate yourself! All right?

Lydia takes her hands off her ears and looks at Ig. Finally she opens her mouth and draws a deep, whistling breath.

LYDIA
Your father and I love you. And we're so sorry all of this happened. But it would be so much better for everyone if you'd just go.

IG
Go where?

LYDIA
I don't care. As long as I don't have to see you. Because it makes me too unhappy. Do you understand?

Ig allows his mother's words to wash over him. Lydia lovingly embraces Ig. She tousles his hair gently.

IG
Sure. I understand.

LYDIA
I don't want you to be my son anymore. I wish I only had Terry. I don't know why I told you that. I hate myself. I was never a good mother. Are you going to go away now?

IG
I was never here.

Ig smiles sadly at his mother. Lydia smiles back at him. Then he turns and heads out of the room.

INT. DERRICK PERRISH'S STUDIO - DAY

Ig comes up the stairs. He trudges past his father's little music studio. He looks at Derrick hunched over his desk, surrounded by his trumpets. Derrick turns to him.

DERRICK
Ig: I thought I heard you come in.

Derrick trails off, looking at the horns. Ig winces.

IG
Let me walk you through this, Dad. Here's the part where you tell me something awful you've been keeping to yourself. Probably something about me. Just say it, and we'll get it out of the way.

DERRICK
I don't want to talk to you. Seeing you is too hard.

IG
Well. That's not too bad. Actually I just covered all that with Mom.

DERRICK
I think about what a good girl Merrin was. You couldn't hear her laugh without smiling. When I think what you did to her, I want to throw up.

Ig nods to hear what he's always suspected: that in his heart of hearts, his father believes that Ig is guilty.

IG
You don't sometimes think maybe - just maybe - I didn't do it?

DERRICK
Of course not. You're trying to get away with murder. You make me want to scrub myself with steel wool. And the worst part is I'm helping you get away with it.

This brings Ig up short: his body goes very stiff.

IG
What exactly do you mean?

DERRICK
The guy who runs the state forensics lab - I went to college with him. After you got arrested, I called him. And I asked him to...

Ig has an impulse to pound his fist into the wall, he's so furious. But he checks himself and turns back to his father.

IG
Are you telling me you got your friend to set that fire in the lab?

DERRICK
When the world comes for my son with the knives out, it's my job to stand in the way.

IG
How could you have done that? You really think I - you didn't ever think that the evidence you got burnt up - that it might've *saved* me?

Derrick is sobbing now. Ig doesn't know what to do.

IG (CONT'D)
Did you tell anybody about this? Does anybody else know what you did?

Derrick looks up at Ig. He nods intensely.

DERRICK
Your friend Lee - he's a better man than you even know. He'd do anything to save you. Did you know that?

And Ig lets the full impact of his father's words register on him. He bolts from the room.

INT. IG'S GREMLIN - DAY

Ig drives madly down the road, not paying any attention to the speed limit or the oncoming cars. He's completely infuriated. He's learned he's not safe even at home.

EXT. LEE TOURNEAU'S OFFICE - DAY

Ig pulls his car into the parking lot of the office just as Lee is coming out of the building. Ig strides over to him.

LEE
What are you doing, Ig? I thought I told you to go home and--

IG
--talk to my family? Yeah, I did that, and it was really enlightening. Do you know what my dad did?

And Lee immediately stiffens up.

LEE
Are you about to tell me something I don't want to know?

IG
Did he tell you that he got his friend to set the lab on fire?

Lee winces: it's clear that he already knew about this. But he didn't want Ig to know about it, and he certainly doesn't want Ig yelling about it in public. He looks around to make sure the parking lot is empty and then leans in to Ig.

LEE
Like I said, whatever your dad did, I don't want to know about it.

IG
But you *already* know about it. He told you. Didn't he?

Lee thinks, weighing his words like the good lawyer he is.

LEE
Hypothetically, if I did know about it, legally I'm required to tell the police. But what good would that do? It'd just make you look even more guilty. And maybe - just maybe - that fire was a blessing in disguise.

IG
How was it a fucking blessing? if the lab hadn't burned down - that evidence would've *cleared* me. Unless you think I actually killed her.

Now Lee doesn't know how to respond for a moment.

LEE
Ig, that's not what I - I don't...

Lee trails off. Ig stares at Lee, shaking his head.

IG
My dad's right, Lee, you're a way better friend than I knew. All this
(MORE)

IG (CONT'D)
time I thought you were working so hard for me because you thought I was innocent. But the real reason you're working so hard for me...is because you think I'm guilty.

Lee looks down at his feet, overcome by remorse.

LEE
Hey, Ig, why don't I give you the keys to my place, you can crash on my couch, and tonight we can--

But Ig cuts Lee off with a renewed sense of purpose.

IG
No. I'm fine. Actually I've got a lot to do. I'm gonna figure out who the hell actually killed Merrin. And I'm gonna get him to confess.

LEE
How are you planning to do that?

Ig gestures to the horns which Lee still can't see.

IG
Lately I can be really fucking persuasive.

And with a devilish grin, Ig gets in his car and drives away. Lee stares after him, completely at a loss.

EXT. O'HARA'S BAR - DAY

Ig pulls the Gremlin recklessly into the parking lot and parks across three spaces. The news vans have found him again: they pull into the parking lot right after him.

Ig gets out of the car and slams the door. Immediately he is surrounded by a crowd of reporters and photographers.

IG
You know, guys, I'd really appreciate it if you'd fuck off and go away.

REPORTER #1
Come on, Ig, admit you killed her, it'd be such a huge scoop for me--

IG
Good to know your journalistic integrity is unimpeachable.

REPORTER #2
If you'd confess to me then I could get out of stupid local news, I bet I could land a network job--

Ig suddenly gets an idea. He stops walking and turns to the reporters and photographers. He speaks very brightly.

IG
Hey, how about you guys kick the shit out of each other? Winner gets an exclusive interview with me. Isn't that what you all want?

Under the influence of Ig's horns, the reporters all turn and look at each other. Then they start pummeling each other. Their fists fly.

For a moment we go into slow motion. It's like some layer of hell: the reporters are pummeling each other with the cameras, and wrapping the microphone cords around each other's necks. Ig steps back to watch the carnage.

IG (CONT'D)
Why didn't I think of that before?

Ig heads into the bar, looking back briefly to watch all of the reporters wrestling and punching each other.

INT. O'HARA'S BAR - DAY

Ig strides inside and sits right down at the bar. O'Hara comes over, shaking his head at Ig.

O'HARA
I told you I don't want you coming around. Get the fuck out of here.

Under the influence of the horns, O'Hara picks up the baseball bat from behind the bar and starts to swing it at Ig.

IG
What the hell, Al, you don't want to do that, you'll get arrested.

O'HARA
Yeah, well, I really don't give a flying fuck if I get arrested.

IG
Look, why don't you get me a whiskey? You know you want the money.

O'Hara considers a moment and then puts down the baseball bat. Ig tosses some money down onto the bar.

O'HARA
What I *really* want is to burn this place down and collect the insurance. I'm sick of fixing drinks for drunks.

IG
Can you not burn down the bar right now? I need your help with something. I need everybody's help.

Ig raises his voice so that all the Barflies can hear him. Under the influence of the horns, they turn to look at him.

IG (CONT'D)
If any of you guys know anything about who killed Merrin, you're gonna have to tell me.

Ig looks at each of the Barflies in turn. They are all silent and still. O'Hara is the first to speak.

O'HARA
Only thing I ever killed was a couple dogs. I run a dogfighting ring out of the supply room back there--

IG
Jesus, Al, I don't want to know that.

A very DEPRESSED BARFLY looks up from his drink at Ig.

DEPRESSED BARFLY
I've been unemployed for three months and I hate my life so I can sure understand *wanting* to kill somebody.

The Depressed Barfly picks up his bar stool and hurls it to the floor. He jumps on top of it, splitting the wood.

IG
Okay, well, Rob, that's not what I--

Meanwhile, O'Hara gets out some lighter fluid and douses the bar with it. And an ELDERLY BARFLY opens his coat and starts to drop his pants.

ELDERLY BARFLY
I really want to show everybody my dick. I want that all the time.

Ig covers his eyes as the Elderly Barfly opens his coat, facing the other Barflies, away from us. And a SURLY BARFLY at the far end of the bar finally speaks up.

SURLY BARFLY
All I know is, I got a cousin who's a cop and he says they got a new witness just come forward and she's gonna talk to the grand jury tomorrow.

IG
What do you mean, a new witness?

SURLY BARFLY
Waitress who served you the night Merrin got killed. Says she saw you drive back to the restaurant and drag Merrin into your car.

Ig takes this in, his face going hard with cold rage. He downs his whiskey in one gulp and nods at the Barfly.

IG
Thanks a lot, Stan, much appreciated.

Ig turns and heads out as O'Hara lights a match. The lighter fluid catches fire. The bar goes up in flames. The Depressed Barfly keeps jumping up and down on the barstool. And the Elderly Barfly keeps right on exposing himself to everyone.

EXT. O'HARA'S BAR - DAY

Ig strides into the parking lot. A couple of the reporters are still wrestling violently with each other. But most of them are lying in a battered, bruised heap in the middle of the parking lot. The reporters are still beating each other up. Ig surveys his handiwork happily.

As he gets into the Gremlin, he turns and looks back at the bar. Through the windows he can see the flames rising higher and higher. He allows himself a small, pleased smile.

Ig gets into the Gremlin. He reaches into his glove compartment and tosses everything out onto the floor of the car. Finally he finds what he's looking for: a micro-cassette recorder. He stuffs the tape recorder in his jacket pocket. He pulls out of the parking lot and speeds down the street.

INT. THE PIT BAR & GRILL - DAY

Ig flings open the door and storms inside. It's mid-afternoon so the place is pretty much deserted. Veronica, the busty waitress, is at her station. Ig checks the cassette player to make sure it's turned on and then strides over to her.

VERONICA
You can seat yourself anywhere, honey.

IG
You're the waitress who served me and Merrin the night she died, right?

Veronica's eyes wander to the horns on Ig's head. Then her face hardens into recognition.

VERONICA
Wait. You're the guy. Ig Perrish.

IG
You've been telling lies about me to the police, haven't you?

Under the influence of the horns, Veronica allows a deeply wicked grin to cross her face.

VERONICA
You know, I don't feel even a little bad about that.

IG
What exactly did you say to them?

Ig is clenching his fists, doing his best to control his temper. His horns are starting to vibrate with power.

VERONICA
I said I went out to the parking lot because your girlfriend forgot her coat and I saw you drive back and yell that you were gonna kill her.

IG
Why the hell would you say that?

VERONICA
Then I said I saw you drag her into your car and drive off.

IG
But none of that happened!

VERONICA
I know. But I want to be the star witness at your trial so I can be in all the newspapers and on TV. I'm pretty enough to be on TV. Especially if I get my tits done like I want.

Veronica is smiling dreamily. Ig snaps: he grabs her around her neck, clutching her by the throat.

IG
I wasn't - I didn't - you're sick!

VERONICA
It's true. I like to tell stories. I tell people my ex died in Iraq. Or else I tell them he died in Afghanistan. I mean, he *could* be dead somewhere. He's dead to me.

IG
You're a fucking crazy liar!

VERONICA
(giggles naughtily)
I am. I am *so* bad. Sometimes people come in and they ask what you did to her. I tell them after you beat her brains in, you turned her over and you fucked her dead corpse in the ass. You should see their faces when I say that.

Disgusted and infuriated, Ig wrenches himself off of Veronica.

IG
Shut the fuck up! You're talking about somebody I loved!

The Manager comes out of his office and runs over to them.

MANAGER
Asshole! Get off her! Are you trying to kill somebody else now?

The Manager grabs Ig and takes several wild swings at him. Ig punches the Manager right in the nose.

Like many big guys, the Manager isn't used to being hit. He grabs his bloody nose and holds it, moaning a little.

Ig surveys his handiwork with more than a little pleasure.

IG
I really should punch more people in the nose.

Ig turns and heads out of the restaurant, leaving Veronica behind to comfort the bleeding and whimpering Manager.

EXT. BLUE NOTE NIGHTCLUB - EVENING

Ig pulls the Gremlin into the parking lot of the small club on the edge of the two-lane state highway. The place used to be grand but it's definitely seen better days.

Ig gets out of the car. He can hear the sound of jazz music coming from the inside of the club.

Ig pulls his hoodie over his head and his horns in an attempt to make himself look slightly less conspicuous. He takes a deep breath and heads inside.

INT. BLUE NOTE NIGHTCLUB - EVENING

Ig hovers in the back of the club. There's a very sparse audience. Terry is playing trumpet in his quintet. All of a sudden Glenna sidles over to Ig. She leans in and whispers.

GLENNA
What the hell are you doing out in public again? How's it going?

IG
How bad do you *think* it's going? Because it's going worse than that.

Ig keeps his voice low so no-one will hear. Glenna belches.

GLENNA
Unh. Excuse me. I had some of those supermarket donuts this morning. I think maybe they'd gone bad.

IG
Yeah, I was there, don't you remember?

GLENNA
You were? Really? I don't remember you. I guess I was still drunk. But don't worry, Ig, things aren't as bad as you think they are.

IG
If you say so.

Glenna puts her hand on Ig's shoulder. It's kind of a tender moment between them. But then Glenna breaks the mood.

GLENNA
Why don't you let me suck your cock in the men's room? I'd like that. And I bet it'd make you feel better.

IG
No, um, thanks, but not right now.

GLENNA
Okay, then, maybe this guy wants his cock sucked. Hey mister! You want your cock sucked in the men's room?

And Glenna heads off. Terry looks out at the audience and his eyes lock with Ig's. Ig nods at Terry and quickly walks out of the club.

EXT. BLUE NOTE NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Ig heads out of the club and leans against his car agitatedly. Some of the patrons trickle out of the club. Finally Terry comes out of the club. He looks very tense.

TERRY
Ig, what are you doing here - Jesus Christ, what's on your head?

IG
They're horns, crazy story - listen, I know you don't want to see me, but I don't know who else to talk to--

TERRY
Do you want to get high? All of a sudden, seeing you, I really want to get wasted. You know?

IG
Would you just focus for a minute, okay, Terry?

Ig puts his hands on Terry's shoulders. Terry is looking more and more jittery but he nods and tries to focus.

IG (CONT'D)
Look, this waitress from the Pit - she told the cops she saw me drag Merrin into my car and drive away from the restaurant--

TERRY
That's totally ridiculous, I know for a fact that's not true--

IG
You know that, and I know that, but how the fuck am I gonna prove--

TERRY
Because, I mean, Merrin left the restaurant with *me* that night.

Under the influence of the horns, Terry is being completely honest with Ig. Ig stops short and stares daggers at Terry.

IG
What the hell are you talking about?

Terry twists his hands around each other very anxiously.

TERRY
I want to tell you something but I *don't* want to tell you.

Impulsively and furiously, Ig grabs Terry by the collar. The lights from the club illuminate them in the empty parking lot on the desolate stretch of highway.

IG
What do you mean, she left with you? How come you never told me about any of this before?

TERRY
I wanted to, Ig, really I did, I was just scared is all.

IG
Tell me or you're gonna have a hell of a lot more to be scared of.

Ig shoves Terry to the ground and jumps on top of him. He pounds his fists into Terry's chest.

He puts his hand on Terry's heart. And all of a sudden it's as though we and Ig can travel into Terry's memories...

EXT. THE PIT BAR & GRILL - NIGHT

...And we are back in the past, the night Merrin broke up with Ig, this time looking at what happened from Terry's perspective. Ig comes out the door. It's raining cats and dogs outside. Terry is running inside, coat over his head.

TERRY
Hey, Iggy, how'd it go, did you already propose--

IG
Party's over, Terry. Go home.

Terry stares quizzically as Ig gets into his Gremlin. Ig pulls into reverse so fast that he backs right into a telephone pole. Terry runs over and pounds on Ig's hood.

TERRY
Ig - come on!

Ig swerves the car wildly. Terry has to jump out of the way. He pulls out of the parking lot just as Merrin comes out of the restaurant. She hugs herself, standing in the rain next to Terry. She stares at Ig miserably. Ig puts his foot on the gas and hightails it onto the highway.

TERRY (CONT'D)
What's wrong? Merrin? What is it?

MERRIN
Can you do me a favor? Can you please get me out of here?

INT. TERRY'S CAR - NIGHT

Terry drives. Merrin sits next to him. She is deeply agitated. Terry is clearly more than a little high.

TERRY
What just happened with you and Ig?

MERRIN
I don't want to talk about it. Is it okay if we don't talk about it?

Merrin runs her hand through her hair, in pain. Terry reaches into his jacket pocket and holds out some pills to Merrin.

TERRY
You want some E, Merrin? This is good enough to cheer anybody up.

MERRIN
Thanks, Terry, but no, I need to feel what I'm feeling tonight.

TERRY
You just tell me where you want to go and I'll take you there.

Outside the rain is pouring down in buckets. Merrin looks very distraught. Terry is blissing out on the ecstasy. Impulsively Merrin turns to Terry, very intensely.

MERRIN
Pull over here. I want to get out of the car. All right?

TERRY
What are you talking about? It's the end of the world out there.

MERRIN
I want to take a walk. I have to clear my head. I need to be alone.

Merrin pulls open the car door while Terry is still in motion. Quickly Terry pulls off to the side of the road.

TERRY
Jesus, Merrin, are you trying to get yourself killed?

Merrin gets out of the car. Terry stumbles out of the car, tripping, laughing to himself.

EXT. GIDEON WOODS - NIGHT

The rain is pouring so hard it's almost impossible to see. Merrin is heading down a dirt path into the forest. Terry follows after her. He is wobbling a little on his feet from the effects of the drugs but he's still in a great mood.

TERRY
Come on! Merrin! Come back!

MERRIN
Thanks for giving me a ride! But I'm fine now! Really I am!

TERRY
Don't be ridiculous, where do you even think you're going?

The rain keeps pouring down. Merrin disappears into the shadows of the trees. Terry follows after her, his knees buckling a little bit beneath him, laughing wildly.

MERRIN
Terry, you're high as a kite! And I need to be alone right now! Can't you just leave me alone?

TERRY
It's hide and seek...you're hiding... and I get to seek after you!

Terry marches further into the woods after Merrin. He lifts his face to the sky as the rain pours down on him. He stumbles a little on his feet as he heads deeper and deeper into the forest. He calls out to the empty air.

TERRY (CONT'D)
Merrin? Merrin?

But he can't see Merrin anywhere. He's soaked to the gills by now. His knees buckle beneath him. His knees give way under him. He collapses into a heap on the muddy ground.

EXT. GIDEON WOODS - LATER

Terry's eyes twitch open. The rain has subsided. It's just drizzling lightly now. It's the middle of the night in the middle of the forest. It takes a minute to get his bearings.

He sees Merrin lying in the dirt below the tree. With some effort he pulls himself to his feet and heads over to her.

TERRY
Hey, did you pass out too?

But he stops short when he gets a closer look at Merrin. It's clear that she's dead just from the look in his eyes. He puts his hand to his chest and lets out a moan...

EXT. BLUE NOTE NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

...and suddenly we find ourselves back in the present. An apoplectic Ig is sitting on top of Terry, punching him.

IG
What did you do to her? Do you even remember if you did anything to her?

TERRY
I never would've - I loved Merrin too - I loved both of you - you know that's the truth!

Ig keeps wailing on Terry, very hard. Terry is so guilt-ridden he doesn't even bother to defend himself.

IG
But you didn't say anything to anybody - even though everybody thinks I killed her? You never tried to help me! You were gonna let me go to jail!

All of a sudden there's the sound of a SIREN. Ig and Terry look up as a police car comes speeding into the parking lot.

Hannity and Sturtz get out of the squad car with their guns drawn. Ig and Terry raise their hands into the air. Ig rolls his eyes: this night just gets worse and worse.

HANNITY
We got a call on the radio there was an altercation out here and we had a pretty good idea who was responsible.

TERRY
Listen, Eric, I'm sorry, this is all my fault, honestly--

HANNITY
Shut the fuck up and go back inside, Terry, this don't concern you.

Terry nods, frightened, and runs back inside the club. Ig yells after Terry, completely enraged.

IG
Coward! Get back here! Damn coward!

But Terry has already disappeared inside the club. Hannity and Sturtz take a step toward Ig, their guns drawn.

HANNITY
You better calm down, Ig, you don't want to be resisting arrest. Or we'll be inclined to use force.

IG
Why are you arresting me? I got in a fight with my brother. So what?

HANNITY
Thing is, this club is across the county line. Which means we caught you fleeing jurisdiction.

IG
For fuck's sake, talk about the most obvious kind of trumped-up charge--

Hannity and Sturtz click back the triggers on their guns. It's clear they're looking for any excuse to shoot him.

HANNITY
I got this guy covered, Sturtz, so why don't you check that Gremlin, see if you can find anything?

Sturtz nods and opens the car door, shining his flashlight, poking around. Ig keeps his hands in the air and tries very hard to keep his tremendous anger in check.

IG
You want a confession, you get my brother back out here, he's sure as hell got something to confess to you--

Sturtz pulls out a plastic bag from under the front seat of Ig's car. He holds it up in the air triumphantly.

STURTZ
Hey, look what I found! This looks like a piece of Merrin's dress, don't it? All covered with blood and stuff.

Sturtz holds up the bag. It does indeed appear to contain a bloody garment. Ig is completely infuriated.

IG
That's not mine! You searched my car right after Merrin got killed, and you didn't find anything--

HANNITY
Guess that's why you were headed out of town at midnight, you were looking to dispose of the evidence--

IG
You planted that on me! Damn you! Goddamn you!

Hannity keeps the gun trained on Ig and nods to Sturtz. Sturtz gets out his handcuffs and heads toward Ig.

In anger and desperation, Ig kicks at Sturtz. Sturtz takes out his billy club and knocks Ig into the dirt.

Now Hannity and Sturtz take the opportunity to really go to town on Ig. Hannity kicks Ig in the stomach. Sturtz puts his boot down on Ig's hand. Ig lets out a cry of pain.

Ig lies there helpless and moaning and furious in the dirt. Hannity and Sturtz look down on him with grim satisfaction.

HANNITY
Looks like he's finally stopped resisting arrest, huh?

INT. SQUAD CAR - NIGHT

Hannity drives down the highway. Sturtz sits next to him in the front seat. A bruised Ig sits handcuffed in the back seat behind the grille. He presses his face to the grille.

IG
Jesus, Eric, you've known me all my life. Don't you know that I never would've done anything to Merrin?

HANNITY
Bullshit, Ig, you *confessed* to me.

IG
That's not what I - I said it was my fault, what happened to her, because I ran off on her, I left her alone--

Hannity turns back to look at Ig through the grille. Under the influence of the horns, he is unrepentantly violent.

HANNITY
You listen to me, asshole - I'm gonna make sure you get punished for what you did to her, even if I have to beat you to death with my own hands.

STURTZ
Do it, Hannity, beat him to death! That'll give me something to whack off over tonight, only I'll be picturing both of you naked.

Ig and Hannity both turn to stare at Sturtz. Ig is actually struck dumb for a moment. Hannity just looks kind of neutral.

IG
It's the goddamn horns that are making you do all this! For Christ's sake!

But Hannity and Sturtz aren't even listening to him. Ig faces front and they speed down the highway in silence.

INT. JAIL CELL - NIGHT

It's the middle of the night. Ig paces back and forth in the holding cell, cupping his hands around the bars, yelling.

Maybe we haven't noticed it happening but it's clear by now that Ig's horns have grown longer and more pointed and he's developed a goatee on his chin. He's more and more the Devil.

IG
Let me out! I want to see my lawyer! God damn it! You can't keep me here!

The door to the room swings open and Lee steps in. He shakes his head at Ig, more than a little spent.

LEE
You're just gonna keep on finding new ways to make this as hard on me as possible, aren't you?

EXT. GIDEON POLICE STATION - MORNING

Lee leads Ig out of the station into the early light of day. Ig is incredibly furious and Lee is exasperated with him.

IG
You know Hannity and Sturtz planted that stuff in my car, right?

LEE
Sure I know that. But it's gonna take all my fancy footwork to make anybody else believe that.

IG
And we've got to go talk to this waitress at the Pit who's been spreading lies about me--

LEE
You're not going anywhere till you calm down - don't make things any harder for yourself--

IG
Plus Terry picked Merrin up from the restaurant that night - he followed her into the woods--!

LEE
What are you trying to tell me, Ig? All of a sudden you think your brother had something to do with--

Ig pulls the micro-cassette recorder from his jacket.

IG
Look, I got it all on tape - see? I recorded the waitress when she--

Quickly Ig rewinds the tape and plays it. What comes out is weird and distorted and unrecognizable. Ig is completely confused by this. Lee just thinks Ig is going nuts.

LEE
What exactly did you record, Ig?

IG
Shit - it's these goddamn horns! They must be interfering with the--

LEE
You're going home and staying there till I say otherwise. Don't fight me on this, Ig--

Lee takes hold of Ig firmly. Instinctively Ig grabs Lee by the neck and pushes him away. Lee's collar pops open.

A small gold cross hangs from Lee's neck. Ig's eyes lock on the cross. He recognizes it instantly.

IG
What are you doing with her cross?

It takes Lee a half-second too long to respond to this.

LEE
What are you talking about?

IG
Why are you wearing Merrin's cross?

Lee puts his hand to the cross he wears around his neck. Ig's eyes widen as he slowly comprehends what's going on.

LEE
This isn't Merrin's, it's mine, I've had it for God knows how long--

IG
You think I'm an idiot? That I don't know what Merrin's cross looks like?

Lee has to admit the truth of this. He takes a deep breath.

LEE
All right, yes, it's hers, she gave it to me, I didn't want to tell you, I knew it'd just make you upset--

IG
Why would she give it to you?

Lee hesitates: he realizes there's no good answer to this question. So he speaks as calmly as possible.

LEE
There are a lot of things you don't know about Merrin. And there are a lot of things I never told you about Merrin and me.

Ig's whole world crumbles. He doesn't want to hear any of this. But he feels like he needs to know the truth.

IG
What are you talking about?

LEE
It wasn't something we meant to happen - it just sort of happened by itself--

IG
You mean *you* were the one she--

LEE
We promised each other we'd never tell you - the last thing I ever wanted to do is hurt you--

IG
If you don't want to hurt me then you're doing a fucking lousy job--

Now that Lee has started confessing, he can't stop it. And Ig can do nothing but stand there in growing fury.

LEE
And when I heard she was dead - the first thing I thought was that you found out about it and you - that's why I've been working so hard to--

IG
Lee - what the hell - how could you?

Ig stares at Lee in complete incomprehension. Lee extends his arms helplessly and speaks with a deep sorrow.

LEE
I was in love with her. I'm still in love with her. And I--

Ig can't hear any more of this. He knows he'll hit Lee if he keeps standing there. So he turns and strides over to the Gremlin. Lee calls after him.

LEE (CONT'D)
Ig - Ig!

But Ig gets in the car and steps on the gas. Lee stares helplessly as Ig burns rubber down the street.

INT. IG'S GREMLIN - DAY

Ig drives. But he's so upset he can't see anything in front of him. He pulls off to the side of the road. He is completely wracked by what he's just heard.

AND WE JUMP INTO HIS HEAD where we see in flashes the times he and Merrin and Lee spent together: hiking through the woods, drinking beer on the water tower, making dinner for each other, dancing at the Blue Note. And it's like he can suddenly imagine the shared glances and meaningful looks that Lee and Merrin were sharing behind his back.

Ig wrenches himself back to reality. He checks the horns in the rear view mirror. He pulls his Swiss Army knife out of his pocket. He extends the blade and plunges it into one of the horns, trying to cut it off.

Ig cries out in pain: the horns are part of him, after all. Still, he keeps slicing through with the Swiss army knife. But finally he realizes the horns aren't going anywhere. He flings the knife onto the floor in anger and frustration.

EXT. WILLIAMS HOUSE - DAY

Ig comes quickly up the walk of the nice suburban house. He knocks on the door. Agitatedly he bounces on the balls of his feet. The door flies open. Heidi and Dale Williams stand in the doorway. They are infuriated to see him.

HEIDI
What the hell are *you* doing here?

IG
I know I'm the last person you want to see--

HEIDI
Get out of here! Are you trying to torture me?

Heidi storms into the yard and lunges for Ig. Ig takes a step back. Dale takes hold of Heidi and holds onto her.

DALE
Don't, Heidi, that's exactly what he wants, just shut the door and then he'll leave us in peace--

IG
And believe me, I wouldn't have come to you if I had anywhere else to go--

Under the influence of the horns, Dale and Heidi are free to express their pain and rage fully and completely. Even Ig is taken aback by the extent of their fury.

HEIDI
Look at you. You're the devil. I *said* you were the devil and I'm right. I should kill you with my bare hands--

Dale is doing his best to hold onto Heidi but she pulls away from him. Some of the neighbors have come out of their houses to see what's going on. Ig takes a deep breath. He speaks as calmly and directly as he can under the circumstances.

IG
But I loved Merrin. You know that. She was my whole life. She's *still* my whole life. And I would've died before I would've done anything to hurt her. You have to believe me.

DALE
You're a liar. Every word out of your mouth is nothing but a lie.

IG
Yeah, see, that's the problem, no one wants to believe the truth--

Now Heidi explodes. She is nearly deranged with grief. She can't listen to Ig's explanations even for a minute.

HEIDI
I don't want to hear any accusations! I don't want to hear any excuses! You're the one who killed her! I know it in my heart!

DALE
I hope you die. I hope you die scared and helpless in the dirt like Merrin.

Dale and Heidi both burst into sobs. Ig stops trying to defend himself. He can't help but empathize with their grief.

HEIDI
You know, when I was watching the cancer devour Julie's insides, the only saving grace was, I could think to myself, this is the worst thing that's ever going to happen to me. But boy was I ever wrong.

Ig takes a step closer to Dale and Heidi and speaks with tremendous gravity.

IG
I swear to you both, I didn't do this to her.

HEIDI
Make him stop, Dale, I can't listen to him anymore, make him go away--

Dale can't listen to this anymore. He steps toward Ig and punches him right in the face. Ig crumples to the ground. He's more startled than hurt.

DALE
You ought to go to church and pray for your soul. Because the next time I see you, I promise you, I'm gonna kill you.

Dale puts his fists up again. Ig rises slowly. He raises his hands into the air in capitulation.

IG
I'm sorry I bothered you. I can see now, coming here, it was only gonna cause you even more pain.

Ig's genuine grief starts to crack something in Dale and Heidi. They actually take in his words for the first time.

IG (CONT'D)
If I was in your shoes I'd think I was guilty too. But believe me: I never could've done anything to hurt Merrin. Not in a million years. Because life without her...it isn't even life anymore.

Ig turns and heads out of the yard. Heidi bursts into fresh tears. Dale takes her in his arms and holds her tenderly.

EXT. SACRED HEART OF MARY CHURCH - DAY

Ig gets out of the Gremlin. Father Mould is in the graveyard just on the side of the church. He is praying over the headstones. A garden rake leans up against the side of one of the headstones. Father Mould looks to see Ig.

IG
Father - I need your help.

Father Mould stares at Ig. His eyes narrow into slits. He takes hold of the rake and strides toward Ig.

FATHER MOULD
Get away from me! Get out of my church! This is a house of God!

IG
Yes, I know, Father, for Christ's sake, that's exactly why I'm here--

Father Mould brandishes the rake at Ig. He dips his fingers in the baptismal fount and flicks some holy water at Ig.

FATHER MOULD
Don't you dare come any closer!

IG
You'd think your cross would have an effect on me but apparently I can still do whatever the hell I want--

FATHER MOULD
Get out of here or I'll--

Ig has run out of patience. Violently he shoves Father Mould to the ground and puts his hands around Father Mould's throat. The rake drops out of Father Mould's hand.

IG
Here's the thing, Father Mould. I woke up like this yesterday morning. And I need to know why.

FATHER MOULD
It's because the Devil owns you. You murdered sweet Merrin Williams. And now you belong to Satan.

IG
Except I didn't kill her. And aren't you supposed to have mercy on me?

Ig tightens his grip on the old man's throat. It takes Father Mould a great deal of effort to respond.

FATHER MOULD
There's no mercy for the Devil. You should go down to that tree where you killed Merrin and hang yourself.

Ig allows himself to consider the full implications of this.

IG
So you won't help me? So there's nobody who can help me?

FATHER MOULD
I'd be happy to help you. I've got a rope in the shed. I'll drag you out to that tree and string you up. If you won't do the decent thing and hang yourself that'd be the next best thing.

The choirmaster and some of the choir members come out of the church after practice. They all stare at Ig with hatred in their eyes. Ig realizes he's outnumbered. He puts his most evil face on and points his fingers at them, menacing.

IG
Get away from me! Don't come any closer! I'm the fucking Devil!

Father Mould and the other parishioners shrink back in fear. Ig backs toward the Gremlin, his eyes on them darkly.

EXT. LEE TOURNEAU'S OFFICE - DAY

Ig strides across the parking lot as Lee comes out of his office. Lee looks up to see Ig with concern.

LEE
Ig - there you are - I called the cops to go and look for you - I was afraid you might've--

IG
I need you to tell me everything that happened between you and Merrin.

Ig grabs Lee by the lapels. Lee puts his arms out, trying not to escalate things, trying to calm Ig down.

LEE
Don't, Ig, you don't want to - it's only going to make things worse--

IG
I want to know how it started. How long it was going on. You need to tell me everything.

LEE
Think about this for a second. Is that really what you want?

Ig lets go of Lee and catches his breath. He speaks with a genuine and bottomless pain.

IG
I don't know her at all anymore. I don't know *you* at all anymore. You were my best friend, Lee.

Lee looks down at the ground for a moment. It takes him a lot of effort to find the words.

LEE
I always loved her. Even when we were all kids. But nothing ever happened. Until this year. She thought it wasn't right between you anymore. And she was lonely. And so it just sort of--

Ig can't contain his emotions any longer. He lunges for Lee and tackles him to the ground.

IG
You're lying! She'd never do that to me! She wouldn't ever--

In fury Ig grabs the cross and pulls it off of Lee's neck.

All of a sudden Lee's entire affect changes. A dark and twisted smile crosses his face. He looks at Ig as though he's seeing him for the very first time.

LEE
Jesus, Ig. Are those *horns*?

IG
Damn right they're horns. So you've got to tell me the truth. You've got to confess everything you've--

Now under the influence of the horns, Lee is blissfully and serenely unremorseful. He grins up at Ig.

LEE
You want me to tell you why I bashed her head in with a rock? I've been lying to you, Ig. Merrin never loved me. But I wanted her since we were kids. And the night she died...I finally made my move. And when she wouldn't let me touch her...I fucking killed her. Are you happy now?

Ig is utterly wrecked and devastated and enraged. Now he finally knows the truth about what happened to Merrin. And it's made him more wild and enraged than he's ever been. He pulls back his arm to sock Lee in the jaw.

IG
Murderer! You fucking murderer!

But suddenly the sound of a police siren. And a squad car pull up into the parking lot. Hannity and Sturtz come striding out, their guns drawn.

HANNITY
What the hell are you doing now, Ig? Are you beating up your *lawyer*?

IG
Jesus Christ, guys, do you show up *everywhere* I go?

STURTZ
We're never that far behind you, Ig. You should know that by now. So put your fucking hands in the air.

Ig knows when he's beaten. He stands up and raises his hands in the air. He nods back at Hannity and Sturtz.

HANNITY
Is there a problem here, Lee?

Lee gets up from the ground and dusts himself off. He smiles pleasantly at Hannity and Sturtz.

LEE
Not at all, Eric. My client and I were just having a discussion. But everything's fine.

Hannity nods back at Lee but he doesn't lower his gun. Ig can only stand there seething.

Lee gets into his car and drives off. Ig stands there in the parking lot, watching him go. Hannity and Sturtz have their guns trained on Ig. They sneer at him.

HANNITY
So why don't you let us take you back to the police station, Ig?

Ig looks back at them with a cold fury. And then a wicked, evil grin forms itself on his face. He smirks back at them.

IG
Wouldn't you guys rather suck each other off in the squad car?

And Hannity and Sturtz turn to look at each other, the power of the horns quickly going to work on them. Desire fills their eyes. They start pulling off their pants as they dash into the squad car and slam the door shut.

Ig shakes his head darkly and gets back into his own car.

INT. IG'S GREMLIN - EVENING

Ig drives like a maniac down the street. The radio blasts something really appropriate like AC/DC or Black Sabbath. Ig sings along at the top of his lungs.

The horns are larger and glint in the sun. His goatee is even longer. He looks wild and insane and barely human.

A snake is in the middle of the road. Ig slams on the brakes to avoid hitting the snake. The snake bares its fangs and hisses. Ig smiles at the snake.

EXT. GIDEON FOUNDRY - EVENING

Ig gets out of the car just behind the foundry. He walks past the tree where Merrin's body was found. He heads toward the old foundry. He carries a large bag of supplies.

Snakes crawl out of the grass around him as he heads toward the foundry. He looks down at them. He realizes they're following him. He considers them.

Ig picks up an old rusted pitchfork from the ground and shakes it at the snakes. They hiss and curve around him but they keep following him.

More and more snakes follow after him, crawling out of the grass and down from the tree branches. Ig turns and looks at the snakes following after him. He smiles darkly.

Ig walks up to the foundry holding the pitchfork in his hand, surrounded by snakes.

INT. GIDEON FOUNDRY - NIGHT

The foundry lies open to the sky, brick arches and pillars rising away into the moonlight. Years of overlapping graffiti cover the walls. Part of one wall has caved in.

Ig maneuvers his way around a mound of bricks, past a wheelbarrow piled with rusting tools, past the chimney. The iron hatch to the blast furnace hangs ajar.

Ig takes candles out of the bag along with a bottle of wine. He puts the candles around the perimeter of the foundry and lights them one by one.

He picks up some wood and stacks it in the furnace. He strikes a match and drops it onto the wood. The wood burns.

By the light from the fire he can see that there's a brown snake on the ground. He starts to talk to the snake.

IG
So: I wonder what I'm supposed to do now that I'm the Devil.

By the light of the candles, Ig can suddenly see that the foundry is full of snakes. Their black eyes glitter in the candlelight. Ig looks more than a little pleased by this.

IG (CONT'D)
What I'm starting to think is that maybe the Devil's not such a bad guy after all. He's the only one who loves people for the miserable creatures that we all really are. And the truth is, he performs a really valuable service.

The thick brown snake twists around one of Ig's ankles. Ig lifts her in one hand, peering down at her thoughtfully.

IG (CONT'D)
It's the Devil's job to punish the people who make the world Hell. Maybe that's the best possible thing I can be right now.

Ig drapes the serpent around his neck. The serpent lets her head fall, lovingly nuzzling against Ig's chest.

IG (CONT'D)
I can punish the people who are making this world Hell for me. And the person who made this world Hell for Merrin.

The serpent peers back at him through golden eyes. Her black tongue flicks out, tasting the air. Ig smiles at her.

IG (CONT'D)
And if I'm gonna be the Devil...I'm sure as shit gonna be the best fucking Devil I can possibly be.

Ig takes an enormous swig of wine, polishing off the whole bottle. He allows his smile to grow even darker.

And then he turns and starts to head out of the foundry with the snake draped around his neck. The tangle of snakes starts to slither after him, following him as he heads outside.

EXT. GIDEON WOODS - NIGHT

The moon is very high in the sky as Ig walks slowly and deliberately through the woods back toward town. The brown snake curls tenderly around his neck.

More and more snakes slither up through the grass and down from the tree branches as Ig heads toward the town.

Ig's horns look almost silvery in the moonlight. His goatee is long and tangled. He moves steadily but unhurriedly through the woods. Revenge can't be taken in haste. The snake around his neck hisses.

EXT. THE PIT BAR & GRILL - NIGHT

Ig paces in the shadows across the street from the restaurant. It's late and the place is closing up. He watches through the windows as Veronica the waitress cashes out for the night.

Veronica comes out the front door of the restaurant and starts walking home down the street. Pleased, Ig follows her, at a discreet distance, still keeping to the shadows. The brown snake twirls around his neck. The other snakes follow him.

EXT. GRANTHAM ROAD - NIGHT

Veronica heads home from work, beat after a long day on her feet. Her heels click against the sidewalk. She snaps the gum in her mouth. The street is dark and quiet.

But maybe not entirely quiet. Suddenly Veronica can hear something behind her. It sounds like...hissing. But when she turns back there doesn't seem to be anyone there.

Veronica starts to walk a little faster now. The hissing seems to be getting louder and louder. She almost breaks into a run, but she can't run too fast on her high heels.

She's definitely very spooked by now. Panting, she turns and heads up the front walk of her house.

INT. VERONICA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Breathing heavily, Veronica throws open the door to her bedroom and flicks on the lights. There's a bed and a vanity and a closet with mirrors alongside one wall. Veronica kicks off her high heels and appraises herself in the mirror.

She runs her long, painted fingernails through her teased hair. She's out-of-breath but she's feeling a little calmer. She turns to put her heels in her walk-in closet...

And suddenly she comes face to face with Ig standing right in front of her, the brown snake draped around his neck. Ig smiles pleasantly at her. The snake hisses.

Veronica lets out a strangled little scream. Ig advances on her, shaking his head, whispering intently to her.

IG
Go on, scream if you want. Because I've got a lot of fun ideas about how I'm gonna shut you up.

VERONICA
How the hell did you get in here?

IG
I go where I want these days.

VERONICA
Get the fuck out of my house right now or I'm gonna call the cops.

IG
Go ahead. I was planning to pay a visit to the police station anyway.

Veronica reaches in her bag for her phone. The snake extends its tongue and hisses at her. In a panic, she drops the bag onto the floor, out of her reach. Ig keeps advancing. Even though Veronica is terrified, she's also a little turned on.

VERONICA
Are you going to rape me? You do anything to me, you're gonna go to jail for the rest of your life.

IG
Thanks to the story you made up, I'm *already* going to jail for the rest of my life. So I'm thinking I should have a little fun with you first.

Veronica's defiance burns away. She's used up all her courage. She stares at Ig with nothing but naked fear.

VERONICA
What are you gonna do?

Ig takes another step toward Veronica. He's almost got her backed up against the wall by now. She's trembling.

IG
That's a good question. I bet I have access to all kinds of plagues and curses. So I'm wondering which one is best for you.

Ig's face is about an inch away from Veronica's face. The snake hisses at her again. A tear falls down her cheek, staining her face with mascara. Ig wipes her tear away.

IG (CONT'D)
I'm thinking, a pretty girl like you who's got mirrors everywhere so she can always look at herself - who made up all kinds of lies about me just so she could get on TV and be famous - I know what you deserve.

And on the precise spot where Ig touched Veronica's face, a brown dot starts to appear. At first it looks like a pimple.

But quickly it grows and distends. Veronica scratches at it. It's a boil. It grows larger and larger on her face.

Ig takes a step back to get a better view of his handiwork. He's genuinely surprised and impressed by his own power.

Veronica turns to look at herself in the mirror. More and more boils grow rapidly on her face. She SCREAMS. She scratches frantically at the boils with her hands.

But when she looks down at her hands and arms, she sees that more and more boils are growing all over them.

The skin on her face and arms and legs swell up. There are so many boils on her now, carbuncles are forming everywhere.

The lumps are full of pus. They're the size of golf balls. Veronica grimaces and howls in unbearable pain.

VERONICA
Stop it! Please! Help me!

Ig pretends to consider for a moment, and then he shakes his head no. The horns start to vibrate slightly. The boils and carbuncles on Veronica's body start to pop loudly.

Blood gushes from the boils in small spurts. Veronica cries out in agony. Ig could not be more pleased with his work.

And with a smile Ig turns and starts out of the room leaving Veronica lying on the floor trembling and moaning. Ig pets the snake tenderly as he walks out the door.

INT. GIDEON POLICE STATION - NIGHT

It's the midnight shift so things are relatively quiet in the station house. Hannity and Sturtz are at their desks. There are several other cops at their stations. The holding cell is filled with a couple of drunk and surly teenagers.

Then the door opens and Ig strides in. The snake isn't around his neck anymore. Ig looks oddly serene. He smiles at Hannity and Sturtz. All the cops stare at him quizzically.

HANNITY
What the hell are you doing here?

IG
I missed you guys so I figured I'd come by and pay you a visit.

HANNITY
Screw you, Ig, get your fucking hands behind your head, right now!

Hannity gives a nod to Sturtz and the other cops. They draw their guns on Ig. He's surrounded and apparently defenseless. But he doesn't look at all nervous. He just keeps grinning.

IG
I know how much you want to get me behind those bars so I decided I'd do you a favor and turn myself in.

HANNITY
On what charge exactly?

IG
Does it really matter? You can make something up like always.

Hannity and Sturtz and the other cops look back and forth at each other. They are astonished but deeply suspicious.

STURTZ
Fuck, Hannity, we shouldn't look a gift horse in the mouth, right?

HANNITY
Just be careful he didn't strap himself to a bomb or something. I wouldn't put it past the little shit.

Sturtz goes over to Ig and gives him a careful pat-down. The other cops keep their guns drawn. Sturtz feels something in the front pocket of Ig's jeans that he can't quite place.

STURTZ
Jesus, Ig, is that a concealed weapon or are you just happy to see me?

And Sturtz reaches into Ig's pocket to disarm him but realizes too late that it's not a gun Ig is concealing.

It's the brown snake!

The snake leaps out at Sturtz, uncoiling its tail, baring its fangs. Sturtz lets out a SCREAM and falls backward.

The snake takes a nice little bite out of Sturtz's neck. Sturtz lies on the floor, writhing and gasping.

The cops are momentarily startled by this. Only Hannity has the presence of mind to advance on Ig.

HANNITY
Shit, that's plenty reason enough for me to shoot you, in my book.

And Hannity starts to cock back the trigger of his gun...

But just at that moment an enormous snake drops from the ceiling onto Hannity's head. Hannity SCREAMS and drops his gun. The snake quickly coils itself around Hannity's neck.

The other cops look up. Snakes of all shapes and sizes break through the ceiling vents and drop down into the room.

One of the cops opens his desk drawer to get another weapon to find several coiled snakes. The snakes strike directly at his face.

Snakes push through the air conditioning vents and slither in through the windows. They coil themselves around the arms and ankles and necks of the cops. They spit venom and bite deeply.

The teenagers in the drunk tank SCREAM but at least the snakes are leaving them alone for the moment.

Sturtz lies on the floor, passed out, foaming at the mouth. The brown snake sucks on his neck.

The largest of the snakes is still coiled around Hannity's neck. It's squeezing so tightly that Hannity has turned a shade of crimson. He extends his arms helplessly to Ig.

But Ig just stands there placidly and serenely in the middle of the maelstrom.

Hannity's eyes bulge out of his head. Finally he loses consciousness. He collapses to the floor in a heap.

Ig considers the unconscious Hannity and Sturtz. He reaches out his arm and the brown snake climbs off Sturtz and happily slithers up Ig's arm and drapes itself back around Ig's neck. He looks over at the kids in the drunk tank.

IG
Somebody should probably call poison control, get those bites looked at.

But the kids are in the cell so there's nothing they can do. The other police officers lie unconscious on the floor. The snake draped around his neck, Ig heads out of the police station. The other snakes slither off after him.

EXT. TERRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Now Ig walks down the quiet street. The snake is still draped around his neck. The other snakes follow him.

Ig stares up at the very nice house. There's a light on in the living room window. He can see Terry sitting on his couch, watching TV and drinking whiskey.

There's a new gravity in Ig's face as he watches Terry through the window. He thinks for a moment. And then he heads up the steps and knocks on the door.

Terry comes to the door. Ig stands there with his horns glowing and the snake draped around his neck. Terry is open-mouthed. He has absolutely no idea how to respond to this.

IG
Hey, Terry, how's it going? Aren't you going to invite me in?

INT. TERRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Terry admits Ig inside. It's the house of a successful musician: there's nice furniture and a state-of-the-art entertainment system but the place is still a mess.

TERRY
Can I get you a beer? A scotch? Some E? Some coke?

IG
I need to keep my head clear tonight. But don't let me stop you. In fact, do as much as you want to do.

Under the influence of the horns, Terry takes his stash of drugs out of their hiding place and lays everything out on the coffee table in front of him. Ig watches Terry closely.

TERRY
So, um, Ig, what brings you out here?

IG
If you want to know the truth I've been on kind of a bender myself. I've been having a lot of fun. More fun than I've had in a while.

TERRY
Oh, well, um. I'm glad to hear it. I know since Merrin died, it's been hard for you. Understandably. But.

Ig sits down in the easy chair across from Terry. The TV is still blaring loudly in the corner. Ig gestures to the drugs. Terry nods. He snorts some coke and takes some of the pills.

IG
It's been a blast tonight but here's where the fun ends. Because this is gonna give me no pleasure at all.

TERRY
What do you mean? What's wrong?

In Ig's presence, Terry is compelled to dump more and more of the cocaine down on the table. He does a big long bump.

IG
You're my big brother. I've always depended on you to look out for me.

TERRY
I've always tried to do my best by you, Ig, you know that.

IG
Except when it counted the most, you totally abandoned me, didn't you?

Terry looks up at Ig. His eyes are wide and frightened. Impulsively he puts a couple more pills in his mouth. He chases them down with the whiskey.

IG (CONT'D)
You saw Merrin lying under that tree and you didn't call the ambulance, you didn't call the cops. You just ran off and left her there.

TERRY
She was already dead, Ig, there wasn't anything I could do for her, and the cops would've thought I killed her--

Terry is getting more and more frantic. He's also starting to feel the effects of the drugs. Ig just sits there very calmly and coldly, his eyes boring into Terry's skull.

IG
Even when I got arrested, you didn't go to the cops and tell the truth. You kept right on protecting yourself.

TERRY
Nobody would've believed me, I'm your brother, they would've thought I was making it all up to help you--

IG
You didn't even *try* to help me. All you wanted to do was save your own skin. You're a selfish motherfucker, Terry, and I hate you.

Ig's voice is calm and emotionless. Terry starts to cry. But Ig just watches him, impassive and unmoved.

TERRY
You're right, I'm a bastard, and you should *kill* me, Ig, that's what I deserve, after what I did--

IG
Yeah, the way I see it, I have every right to kill you. But I think I'm
(MORE)

IG (CONT'D)
gonna let you do that to yourself.
Why don't you finish all that off?

Ig gestures to the drugs on the table. Terry looks at him.

TERRY
All of it?

IG
I think I've made myself clear.

Ig watches as Terry does all of the drugs left on the table. Now Ig rises. The snake uncoils itself a little around Ig's neck. Ig leans over Terry and whispers in his ear.

IG (CONT'D)
I want you to see what she saw. I want you to feel what she felt. And I don't want you to forget *anything* that happened here tonight.

Terry looks up at Ig, as the drugs start to fully kick in. And we enter into Terry's mind, seeing what he sees, hearing what he hears, as he starts to hallucinate...

In Terry's mind, Ig's visage becomes even more horrible. Maggots and worms crawl across his skin.

The snake around Ig's neck grows larger and thicker. It's jaws become enormous. The snake licks Terry's face with its forked tongue. Terry lets out a moan.

And then Terry has a vision of Merrin, crying out in pain, helpless in the woods. She is lost and desperate. She calls Terry's name. Terry convulses into sobs. Merrin vanishes.

Now, inside Terry's mind, blood starts to drip from the walls and the ceilings of the room. Terry rises from the couch in a panic. He looks down at his skin and it looks like it's starting to decay on his body, like he's becoming a corpse.

It's like Hell is all around him and everywhere inside him. There's no escape. It's utterly terrifying.

Terry tries to make a sound but nothing will come out of his mouth. He slowly sinks to the floor, agonized, tortured.

And now we move back out of Terry's mind. Ig stands over him, the snake hissing with delight.

Terry lies unconscious on the floor. His eyes twitch. He groans softly. He's clearly still in immense torment.

Ig doesn't allow himself a smile this time. He's nothing but grim determination. His work here is done.

Ig pets the snake that's draped around his neck and walks out of the apartment, leaving Terry behind him.

EXT. GIDEON FOUNDRY - NIGHT

Ig walks back through the woods toward the foundry. He can see that the fire he started is still blazing. He's got only one thing left to do tonight and it's far and away the most important thing he has to do.

Ig takes his phone from his pocket. He dials a number. And he speaks into the receiver, approximating the heightened emotions of the human being he used to be.

IG
(into the phone)
Lee? I'm sorry I woke you up. I know it's late. But I need to talk to you tonight. I can't say what it is over the phone. I'm at the foundry. Can you come here? Please? Thanks so much. See you soon.

Ig puts the phone back in his pocket. He is completely calm and serene once again. He heads toward the foundry. The snakes follow after him.

INT. GIDEON FOUNDRY - NIGHT

Ig sits next to the furnace, enjoying the heat, drinking the dregs out of the bottle of wine, as he awaits the inevitable. The snakes slither across the foundry floor.

In the distance Ig can hear the sound of a car engine. Then he hears the engine being cut, and a car door being slammed. He smiles in anticipation.

Ig looks up as Lee steps into the foundry. Lee is taken aback to see Ig's appearance: Ig's clothes are ripped and torn, his goatee is scraggly, the horns are long and red.

LEE
Jesus, Ig, what happened to you?

IG
That's a really excellent question. Thanks so much for coming by.

Ig and Lee circle around each other.

LEE
Here's the problem: I know I've told you some things. But I can't really remember exactly what I've told you.

IG
I'm extremely interested in hearing everything you've got to say.

LEE
Yeah, well, I'm not sure it's in my best interests to tell you anything.

Ig and Lee are sizing each other up with a dangerous calm.

IG
Here's the beauty part. You're not gonna be able to help it. You're gonna confess everything to me. And then I'm going to kill you.

LEE
I'm not sure I like that plan.

IG
Well, if you don't want to confess to me, I got no problem using force.

And Ig lunges at Lee, driving the horns into his chest. Lee lets out a cry and tumbles to the floor. He makes a muzzy, damaged sound of pain.

IG (CONT'D)
So tell me why, Lee? Why?

Doubled over in pain, and under the influence of the horns, Lee can't help but unburden himself to Ig.

LEE
I saw her the exact same moment you saw her. The exact same moment.

And as Ig leans down and grabs Lee roughly by the collar, we and Ig enter into Lee's memories...

INT. SACRED HEART OF MARY CHURCH - DAY

And now we're back in the past, watching Merrin flash Ig in the eyes with the cross, but this time from Lee's perspective. He is watching Merrin too. Her red hair glints in the sun. She's easily the most beautiful girl he's ever seen.

LEE (V.O.)
I fell in love with her too. Who wouldn't fall in love with her?

INT. GIDEON FOUNDRY - NIGHT

And back in the present, Ig shoves Lee roughly to the ground again. He kicks Lee roughly in the stomach with his boot.

LEE
And I was the one who fixed her cross. She should've been mine all along.

IG
But you were my best friend. So how the hell could you--

Under the influence of the horns, Lee is serene and without remorse. He gives Ig a nonchalant little shrug.

LEE
I've always known I had this darkness in me. Even way back then.

EXT. TOURNEAU HOUSE - NIGHT

And now we're back in the past. The 15-year-old Lee is walking back and forth along a high wooden fence out in back of his house. His slatternly mother MRS. TOURNEAU (35) calls out to him from the kitchen window.

MRS. TOURNEAU
For crying out loud, Lee, how many times do I have to tell you to stay off that fence?

LEE AT 13
Lay off me, Mom, I'm fine!

A feral stray cat jumps onto the fence from another yard. Lee puts his arm out toward the tomcat. The cat growls.

MRS. TOURNEAU
And don't touch that cat! She won't learn to like you. She's past the point where she can feel for people.

LEE AT 13
Go to bed, Mom!

Mrs. Tourneau sighs and disappears into the house. Lee puts his hand out to touch the cat. The cat growls at him.

LEE AT 13 (CONT'D)
Hey, little girl. You want to be mine? I can take care of you. What do you say?

Lee reaches out to pet the cat. The cat squeezes its eyes shut in a look of pure animal pleasure.

Then without warning the cat reaches out and lashes Lee with its claw. Lee is bleeding from a small gash in his forehead. He touches his hand to his forehead and looks at the blood.

The feral cat comes jumping off the fence and crawls over to Lee. Lee stares at the cat blankly, without any emotion.

Then he extends his arm to the cat and puts his hand around the cat's throat. Staring blankly, he squeezes the life out of the cat. He lets its limp body fall to the ground. And at this he finally allows himself a small smile.

INT. GIDEON FOUNDRY - NIGHT

And now we find ourselves back in the present. Lee is lying in the dirt. Ig rests his boot on top of Lee's chest.

LEE
I guess I knew even then...when I love something...or someone...and they don't love me back...it makes me really mad. Mad enough that I can do awful things.

Standing over Lee, with his horns glowing red, Ig is growing more and more enraged.

IG
Well, you sure as shit fooled me. I always thought you've spent your whole life trying to be good.

LEE
That's because I've spent my whole life trying to control myself.

IG
Then why the hell did you save me when we were kids? Why did you pull me out of the water?

And at this, Lee allows himself a lost little smile.

LEE
Why do you *think* I did it?

EXT. KNOWLES RIVER - DAY

And we are back in the past again, watching as Lee does mouth-to-mouth on Ig. Ig coughs and spits up water.

LEE AT 13
I thought you were dead. You looked a little dead. You weren't breathing.

Ig coughs and gasps some more, lying in the mud. Merrin and the other kids come running over. Lee looks up at Merrin.

LEE (V.O.)
I saved you because I thought it would impress her. Because I thought it'd make her fall in love with me.

Lee looks at Merrin, who is near tears. She yells at Ig.

MERRIN AT 13
I can't believe you - you could've killed yourself. Why did you do that? You could've *died*!

Merrin bursts into tears and runs off down the road. Ig and Lee both stare after her longingly.

INT. GIDEON FOUNDRY - NIGHT

And now back in the present, the flames from the fire in the furnace cast strange shadows over Ig's and Lee's faces. Lee lies on the floor, the snakes slithering around him. Ig stands over Lee, his boot still on Lee's chest.

LEE
Of course, looking back now, that was the biggest mistake of my life. If I'd let you drown back then, none of the bad things would've happened.

And in a hot fury, Ig picks up Lee by the collar and slams him against the wall very hard. Ig punches Lee repeatedly in the face but Lee just takes the punches, smiling dreamily.

EXT. GIDEON WOODS - DAY

And we're back in the past again, seeing a scene we've seen before, but this time from Lee's perspective: Ig and Merrin kissing in the woods for the first time. Lee watches from behind the trees, a complicated smile on his face.

LEE (V.O.)
She should've fallen in love with me. I was the one who saved you. I was the one who was the hero.

Lee turns and heads off into the woods. His face crumples and he starts to sob. He sobs inconsolably into his hands.

INT. GIDEON HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

And we are back in the past again. Lee is at his locker watching down the hall as Merrin and Ig hold hands. Ig heads off into a classroom and Merrin comes over to Lee shyly.

MERRIN AT 13
You fixed my cross for me.

LEE AT 13
Oh. That. Well. It was nothing.

Lee flushes beet red. Merrin smiles at him gratefully.

MERRIN AT 13
And you saved Ig's life. He'd be dead without you. You know that.

LEE AT 13
I did what anybody would've done.

MERRIN AT 13
But I guess I owe you a lot. Don't I? I guess I owe you everything.

And with that, Merrin kisses Lee lightly on the forehead. It's an innocuous gesture of gratitude but for Lee it's clearly so much more. Merrin turns and heads off down the hall. And Lee stares after her, his eyes locked on her.

EXT. GIDEON WOODS - DAY

And on another day in the past, we see another scene we've seen before, but this time from Lee's perspective. Lee watches from a distance as Ig and Merrin climb up into the treehouse holding hands. Lee's face is red with pain.

LEE (V.O.)
I watched the two of you in the treehouse that time.

INT. GIDEON FOUNDRY - NIGHT

And now we are back in the present, as Lee continues to make his great confession. Ig straddles Lee, overpowering him. Lee is trapped under Ig's weight. Lee's face is battered and bruised and bleeding but he is grinning.

LEE
I knew everything about the two of you for the past ten years. I even knew when she was gonna leave you.

EXT. CHURCH STREET - DAY

And now we are back in the past, but this time it's the very recent past. Merrin sits on a bench on the side of the well-traveled village street as Lee walks up to her.

MERRIN
Thanks for coming to see me. I really need to talk to you. You're Ig's best friend, after all.

LEE
Actually I'm pretty sure that *you're* Ig's best friend.

Merrin winces slightly. The two of them rise and walk down the sidewalk together. Merrin twists her bag in her hands.

MERRIN
I think Ig is getting ready to propose to me. Do you know anything about that?

LEE
Oh, um, Merrin, I'm not sure that I--

MERRIN
The thing is, there are some things I've learned about myself lately. And now it seems clear to me...I can't ever marry Ig. And if I can't marry him, then I probably shouldn't be with him anymore.

Lee stares at Merrin. He's more than a little bit stunned.

LEE
Have you told him this? Because he was just talking to me about what you guys wanted to name your kids.

MERRIN
Well, now I know for sure I'm never gonna have kids with him.

LEE
(taken aback a moment)
Can I ask you - I mean - why are you telling me all this?

MERRIN
If I do this...*when* I do this...I want to be sure that you'll be there for him. You don't think less of me, do you?

Merrin is looking more and more distraught. Lee speaks as smoothly as possible, trying his best to comfort her.

LEE
I'd think less of you if you pretended you could be with Ig when you know in your heart there's no future.

MERRIN
That's it. That's exactly it. Thank you for letting me tell you. I needed to tell somebody.

And Merrin leans in and kisses Lee on the forehead again, just like she did when they were kids. Lee smiles at her.

INT. GIDEON FOUNDRY - NIGHT

And we are back in the present. Ig is deeply enraged and infuriated by all of the things that Lee is telling him. But Lee keeps right on confessing, utterly calm and serene.

LEE
I thought for sure that she was breaking up with you so she could be with me. I was absolutely certain that's what she was trying to say.

IG
Are you crazy? She never would've--

But Lee is barely listening to Ig. He's lost in his reverie.

LEE
I saw her leave the restaurant that night. I followed Terry's car.

EXT. GIDEON WOODS - NIGHT

...And we are back in the past, the night Merrin got killed, but this time we're watching the events unfold from Lee's perspective.

He is in his car parked across the street from Terry's car on the edge of the woods. The rain is pouring so hard it's almost impossible to see.

Merrin is heading down the dirt path into the forest. Terry follows after her. He is wobbling a little on his feet from the effects of the drugs but he's still having a great time.

TERRY
Come on! Merrin! Come back!

MERRIN
Thanks for giving me a ride! But I'm fine now! Really I am!

TERRY
Don't be ridiculous, where do you even think you're going?

The rain keeps pouring down. Merrin disappears into the shadows of the trees. Terry follows after her, his knees buckling a little bit beneath him, laughing wildly.

MERRIN
Terry, you're high as a kite! And I need to be alone right now! Can't you just leave me alone?

TERRY
It's hide and seek...you're hiding... and I get to seek after you!

Terry turns and heads further into the forest. Lee watches from his car by the side of the road.

Then Lee makes a decision. He gets out of his car and heads out after Merrin and Terry.

EXT. GIDEON WOODS - LATER

Lee walks deeper and deeper into the woods. The rain is pouring down in buckets. It's hard to see more than a few feet in front of him. He cups his hand to his eyes.

He sees Terry lying in an unconscious heap on the ground. And then he sees Merrin trudging through the mud. He catches up to her. He spins her around and smiles at her.

MERRIN
Jesus, Lee, you frightened me.

LEE
Come on out of the rain, Merrin. Let's go back to my house. You need a drink and someone to talk to.

MERRIN
I'm fine, Lee, really I am, I just need to be alone--

Impulsively Lee takes Merrin by the shoulders and kisses her on the mouth. Instinctively she pulls away from him roughly.

MERRIN (CONT'D)
What the hell are you doing?

LEE
If you're not in the mood tonight I understand. We can just talk.

MERRIN
Are you joking? Because this is a really bad time for--

LEE
But now we can be together.

MERRIN
What are you talking about?

LEE
This is why you broke up with Ig. Isn't it?

Merrin is so stunned she can't respond for a moment.

MERRIN
That's what you think? You're his best friend. You're *my* friend. Don't you understand anything?

LEE
You said there were things you knew about yourself, about how you feel. I know you're in love with me. And I'm in love with you. I've always been in love with--

Lee grabs hold of Merrin. Merrin wrenches herself away.

MERRIN
Let go of me - you don't understand anything - you don't know the first thing about what I'm--

LEE
Stop - stop - just listen to me!

MERRIN
Oh, Jesus, Lee. You thought I broke up with Ig so you and I could - I'd rather be *dead*. Don't you know that?

Lee is utterly devastated and shattered to hear this. So the rage is quickly building inside of him.

LEE
That's not what you mean! You're just saying that! That's not what--

MERRIN
You don't know anything about me! I love Ig! More than the world - more than life - you can't possibly imagine how much I love him!

In a blind fury, Lee grabs hold of Merrin. He shoves her to the muddy ground. He rips the cross off her neck.

He cries out in rage as we tilt away from them, moving up to the sky and the rain pouring down on them from the heavens...

INT. GIDEON FOUNDRY - NIGHT

And now we are in the present. Lee has finished his great confession. He lies helpless on the foundry floor.

But Ig is suddenly very still and quiet. His rage starts to bleed out of him. For a moment, he is overcome by pain and loss. He turns to look at Lee. He speaks very quietly.

IG
That's the last thing she said? That she loved me?

And tears start to form in Ig's eyes, clouding his vision for just a split second.

But that split second is all the time Lee needs. He reaches out his hands and grabs hold of Ig's ankles. He pulls hard on Ig's ankles. Ig goes toppling to the floor of the foundry.

Quickly Lee grabs the shovel from the wheelbarrow. He smashes the shovel into Ig's face, again and again. Ig tries to get up but Lee keeps right on whacking him with the shovel.

Ig is bleeding profusely from his mouth. He spits a tooth out into his hand. He looks up at Lee with rage.

But Lee just slams the shovel into Ig's face again.

LEE
It wasn't fair. I loved her more than anything.

Ig tries to speak but it's hard to make out the words.

IG
You sure have a hell of a way of showing it, you know that?

With enormous effort, Ig starts to try and rise to his feet. Lee turns the shovel around and slams the base of it into Ig's skull. Ig falls back to the floor.

LEE
The way I figure it, you confessed to me, and then you killed yourself.

Lee brings the heel of his boot down on Ig's hand. Ig can hear the bones of his hand breaking. He lets out a cry.

IG
You don't want to do this. It's the horns. Lee. It's the goddamn horns.

Lee picks up a wrench from the wheelbarrow. He pounds it into Ig's face. Ig is a bloody mess.

LEE
That's enough now. Isn't it?

EXT. GIDEON FOUNDRY - NIGHT

It's dark and quiet in the forest. The only light emanates from the fire in the foundry's furnace.

Lee comes out of the foundry, dragging Ig by the horns over to the Gremlin. Ig is too weak to resist. He's barely even strong enough to speak.

IG
Lee. Stop it. Lee.

Ig can't find the strength to do so much as kick his feet. Lee hoists Ig up and pushes him into the Gremlin.

INT. IG'S GREMLIN - EVENING

Ig lies helplessly across the front seat of the Gremlin. Liquid sploshes over him. He looks up to see Lee with the open can of gasoline, pouring it all over Ig.

LEE
I've always wanted to try this.

Lee fishes a box of matches out of his pocket. He strikes the match and flicks it through the open window.

The burning match hits Ig's forehead, flips and falls. And then the whole car fills with flame.

Ig grabs the door and tries to push it open but it's no use. The plastic of the dash blackens. The windshield soots over.

Ig reaches blindly through the flames and slams the gearshift into neutral. Then he lifts the parking brake.

EXT. KNOWLES RIVER - NIGHT

Lee watches as the burning car starts to lurch forward. The car is traveling down the hill on the exact same path that the shopping cart traveled down the hill ten years ago.

The car breaks through the fence and heads down the hill toward the river, picking up speed along the way.

The Gremlin hits the slight dirt incline. The car is launched into the water.

Lee stands on the riverbank, watching the burning car.

White smoke pours from the edges of the Gremlin. Lee watches closely as the car sinks into the river. And perhaps as the power of the horns wear off, remorse creeps into Lee's face.

EXT. GIDEON POLICE STATION - NIGHT

The TV crews are gathered around Hannity, who stands with his men, giving an impromptu press conference. Hannity is bandaged and bruised from his run-in with the snakes.

HANNITY
Mr. Perrish committed suicide earlier this evening. We've recovered his vehicle and we're examining it for his remains.

INT. TERRY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Now the press conference continues, but we're watching it on the television in the hospital room.

Terry sits up in his hospital bed. He is strapped to an IV and he looks pale and wan from his drug overdose last night, but he seems to be on the road to recovery.

Derrick and Lydia are next to him watching the television. Lydia lets out a sob. Derrick is white as a sheet. It's clear that they're all going through hell tonight.

Derrick and Lydia are too upset to speak. But Terry stares at the television in outrage and pain.

TERRY
But he didn't kill her. So he never would've killed himself.

EXT. KNOWLES RIVER - DAWN

The area has been cordoned off with police tape. The wreckage of the Gremlin has been deposited on the shore. But otherwise the night is completely quiet and still.

All of a sudden a hand emerges from the water. Then another hand. And then slowly Ig pulls himself out of the river.

His clothes are in tatters. His skin is burnished to a deep red. His horns are longer and more impressive than ever.

But otherwise he looks completely healed. In fact he looks stronger than ever. He mutters to himself.

IG
Well, one thing I'll say in my favor, I'm really fucking hard to kill.

EXT. WILLIAMS HOUSE - MORNING

Ig walks up the path to the Williams house in the early light of day. He looks kind of insane: burnished skin, long horns, thick goatee, tattered clothes.

There's a thin layer of mist on the ground. He knocks on the front door. After a moment Heidi comes to the door. She lets out a cry of pain.

IG
Please, I know how I look, but just listen to me, just for a minute--

Dale comes to the door right behind Heidi. He grabs hold of her and holds her tightly, protecting her from Ig.

DALE
Why aren't you dead? They said you were dead!

IG
Is that really what you want? You want me dead?

And under the influence of the horns, Dale and Heidi have to consider this very seriously. Finally Heidi shakes her head.

HEIDI
I've been praying for you to die. But when I heard the news on the TV...it didn't help one bit. It only made everything worse.

Dale and Heidi are clearly in bottomless pain. Ig speaks to them with a deep surge of feeling.

IG
I didn't kill Merrin. I don't expect you to ever believe me. But I never would've done anything to hurt her.

Ig is speaking with deep sorrow. Despite himself, Dale can't help but be moved by Ig's clearly genuine feeling.

HEIDI
After you came to see us yesterday...I could see how lost you are without her. As lost as I am. And I realized there was no way you could've...

Heidi can't go any further. Dale holds her tightly.

DALE
Only what do you want from us? Why can't you just leave us alone?

IG
Because there's so much I still don't understand. Merrin told me she didn't love me anymore - but then just before she died - she said she loved me more than anything. Why would she...? I'm asking you if you can help me.

DALE
Why the hell *should* we help you? Give me one good reason.

HEIDI
No, Dale, it's all right, really.

Ig hesitates a moment. And then he holds up his hand. Heidi and Dale both seize up for a moment. And then Ig takes his hand away. He turns to Dale and speaks very gently.

IG
I know that when you were sixteen, you visited your father's mistress and you paid her two thousand dollars to leave town for good.

DALE
Stop it. Stop that.

And now Ig turns to Heidi, speaking very intently to her.

IG
And I know the day after Merrin died, Father Mould told you God doesn't give people any burdens they can't handle, and then you slapped him.

HEIDI
But why do you - how do you...?

IG
When I'm near people, they do bad things. And I know all kinds of things I shouldn't know about them.

Dale and Heidi stare at Ig, taking all of this in.

HEIDI
You poor boy - how on earth did you become like this?

IG
I wish I knew. I've got no idea what God's plan is for me.

Dale pulls a flask out of his jacket pocket and takes a swig. He speaks with an intense bitterness.

DALE
I don't believe a merciful God would take both my girls from me. One from the cancer and the other killed out in the woods that way.

IG
You know, I asked Merrin a million times to tell me about her sister, but she'd never say anything.

HEIDI
Julie was such a beautiful person. I try to remember that, but mostly I remember how she was at the end.

Ig watches as Dale and Heidi look out at the river.

DALE
She weighed barely eighty pounds, and seventy pounds of that was hate. She'd lost her hair, and there'd been all these surgeries, she felt like somebody from a horror movie, and Merrin was so pretty.

It's clear to Ig that Dale and Heidi haven't ever told anybody about this, not ever.

HEIDI
She told us if we loved her we'd put a pillow over her face and get it done. She told me I was glad it was her dying instead of Merrin because I always liked Merrin better. It was awful really. I don't know what else to say about it.

Dale won't allow himself to cry. He looks out at the horizon.

DALE
I just wish we could burn down our whole lives and start over again.

IG
People say you should always do the right thing. But sometimes there's no right thing. And then...well, then you just have to pick the sin you can live with.

Heidi hesitates, thinking very hard. Then she turns to Ig.

HEIDI
Why don't you come inside? I have something I need to give you.

INT. MERRIN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Dale and Heidi lead Ig into the room. It looks like it hasn't been changed in any way since Merrin was a teenager. It hits Ig in the gut to be back in this room again.

HEIDI
The other day I found this in the back of Merrin's closet. I guess she hid it back here one Sunday when she came over for dinner.

Heidi goes over and opens Merrin's top bureau drawer. She takes out a wooden box. Taped to the top of the box is a piece of paper that reads: FOR IG - IF ANYTHING HAPPENS.

HEIDI (CONT'D)
I wasn't ever going to give it to you. But now...it's different.

Ig is deeply moved by this. He takes the box from Heidi.

IG
I want to give you something too.

Ig digs deep into the pocket of his tattered jeans. He takes Merrin's cross and holds it out to Dale and Heidi.

DALE
I know what this is. I gave this to Merrin when she was a little girl.

IG
I figure you ought to have it back.

Dale considers the cross. Then he shakes his head sternly.

DALE
You know, son, I think you need her blessing even more than we do. I think you need her to keep you safe. Now more than ever probably.

Ig considers this for a moment. Then he nods. He puts the cross back in his pocket. Ig and Dale look at each other. Then Dale holds out his hand. Ig shakes it gratefully.

HEIDI
You take care of yourself, all right?

EXT. GIDEON WOODS - DAY

Ig comes up the hill. He carries the box that Heidi gave him. He heads over to the tree where Merrin died. He looks up at the treehouse high in its branches. Then he makes a decision. He climbs the tree.

INT. TREEHOUSE - DAY

Ig steps into the treehouse. It looks the same as it's always looked: an abandoned shrine in the middle of the forest. He considers the little figures and the altar. He looks at his reflection in the mirror. He looks at the horns on his head.

He sits down in front of the altar. He opens the box. Packed inside are mementos of their relationship: concert tickets, photographs, rings, a faded patch of denim from her jeans, and one of the devil figurines from the treehouse.

And on top of all the mementos, there is a clean, crisp new envelope with the word "IG" on the outside. Ig smiles. He opens the envelope. There's a letter inside. Ig opens it.

It's several pages of dots and dashes. He looks at them. He knows exactly what they are. It's Morse code. Ig puts his hand to his heart. He knows this is just for him.

Ig traces his fingers over the lines, translating them.

IG
Dear Ig...you'll never read this while I'm alive. I'm not even sure I want you to read it after I'm dead. I think you're gonna ask me to marry you soon and you don't know how much I want to say yes. But I can't. The sort of cancer I have is...

Ig's world quickly rearranges itself in his mind. He tries to keep reading but he can't continue. Finally he gets up the strength to keep reading the letter.

IG (CONT'D)
The sort of cancer I have is the kind that runs in families. So I know from experience that there's nothing anybody can do about it.

And as Ig continues to read, the leaves swirl up around him, and Merrin appears in the misty sunlight, kneeling in front of him. Ig looks up to see her. His heart is in his throat.

MERRIN
I'm afraid if I tell you I'm sick, you'll want to marry me even more, and I'll be weak and say yes, and then you'll be shackled to me, watching while they cut pieces off. I saw it all happen to my sister. You'll go through hell and then I'll die anyway.

Ig shakes his head and tries to speak but the words catch in his throat. Merrin just shakes her head at him sadly.

MERRIN (CONT'D)
I can hurt you just enough to push you away. I'm not looking forward to it but it'll be kinder than letting this thing play itself out. I want you to remember what was good in me, not what was awful. So I'm going away to Boston and soon this'll all be over and you'll never see me again.

Merrin holds her hand out to graze Ig's cheek. It's almost as though she can touch him but she can't, not quite.

MERRIN (CONT'D)
I just want to leave you peacefully. And I hope that you can forgive me and have a wonderful life. That's mostly what I want to say. Here's the rest - the first message I sent you when I shined my cross in your eyes: I love you. Your girl...Merrin.

And Merrin vanishes into the dappling sunlight. Ig is alone. For the first time he allows himself to cry. He sits there and weeps for his lost love.

Then he rises and heads over to the altar. He bows his head a little in a prayer. He considers his horns in the mirror.

Ig takes Merrin's cross out of his pocket. The chain is broken in two. He picks up a small piece of string from the altar. He threads the cross through the string.

Looking at himself in the mirror, he puts the cross around his neck and ties a knot in the string.

To his astonishment, his face and body start to change. The horns disappear. He looks completely like his true self.

Ig stares at his reflection in the mirror. He is human again.

EXT. GIDEON WOODS - DAY

Ig comes down out of the treehouse and walks through the woods in his human form. The sky looks bluer to him now.

The colors seem sharper. And the sounds of the birds in the trees seem brighter.

This is what it's like to be human. He'd almost forgotten how wonderful it is.

EXT. GLENNA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Glenna opens the door to find Ig standing on her stoop. Instinctively she throws her arms around him, embracing him.

GLENNA
Oh, goddamnit, Ig, I thought you were dead. They said you were dead.

IG
Only the good die young, I'm afraid. Do you think I can come in? It's not really safe for me out here.

INT. GLENNA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Glenna quickly leads Ig into her apartment and shuts the door behind her. Ig bounces on the balls of his feet.

GLENNA
I've been so worried for your whole family. I tried to visit your brother in the hospital this morning but the doctors wouldn't let me in--

Ig is overcome with remorse for what he did to Terry.

IG
Is Terry going to be all right?

GLENNA
Your mother said he took a lot of drugs but they pumped his stomach and he's gonna be okay.

IG
That's all my fault. I need to try and - but listen - I know who killed Merrin - it was Lee.

Glenna stares at Ig, completely astonished.

GLENNA
Lee Tourneau?

IG
I know you don't believe me. Nobody's ever gonna believe me.

GLENNA
I believe you. I know you're not a liar and I know you're not a killer. I've always known that.

Ig gets a little bit of a lump in his throat.

IG
Thanks, Glenna, I'm pretty sure you're the only person who...thanks.

GLENNA
So what are you gonna do now? You're not gonna try to kill him, are you?

And Ig has to consider this very seriously.

IG
I tried to get revenge on Lee. On everybody. And it was a hell of a lot of fun for a while. But in the end I got set on fire and drowned in my car. And none of it brought Merrin back to me.

GLENNA
But once everybody finds out you're still alive - you're gonna be thrown in jail for the rest of your life or even worse--

IG
You might be right about that.

Impulsively Glenna reaches out and takes Ig by the hand.

GLENNA
Hey, listen, what if we run away together? I always wanted to get the hell out of Gideon anyway.

IG
If you stay with me I'm just gonna drag you down.

Glenna shakes her head and smiles sadly at Ig.

GLENNA
Thing is, I've always been in love with you, ever since we were kids. You know that, don't you?

IG
I guess I did always know that. I'm so sorry about all that, Glenna.

GLENNA
It's not your fault. I know you could never love me back. You're still in love with Merrin. She was so nice and good and never made any mistakes. And I'm *all* mistakes.

Glenna's eyes are watering over but she won't allow herself to cry. Ig is deeply touched by her. He wants to do something for Glenna but he's not sure what.

IG
But you can still get out of Gideon if that's what you want.

GLENNA
What are you talking about?

IG
Do something good for yourself. Put this town in your rear-view mirror on the way to something better. Listen: where would you go if you could go anywhere in the world?

Glenna allows herself to seriously consider this.

GLENNA
I went to New York City once and I really liked it. Those people selling sweet peanuts on the corners. Do they still sell those in New York?

IG
I don't know. I think so. If you don't go, you'll never find out.

Glenna looks around at her dingy apartment. Slowly her face hardens in determination.

GLENNA
You know, I don't think there's anything in this entire place that I want to take with me.

EXT. GLENNA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Glenna leads Ig outside, checking furtively to make sure the coast is clear. Glenna throws her arms around Ig and embraces him. Then she pulls away and wipes the tears from her eyes.

GLENNA
But Ig, what's gonna become of you?

IG
(a wry shrug)
That's what I have to figure out.

GLENNA
Please take care of yourself. You may think you're the Devil, Ig, but you're the best man I know.

Ig opens his mouth to respond but he doesn't know what to say. Glenna gets in her car and drives away. Ig watches as her car disappears down the road.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY

Derrick and Lydia are sitting alone in the waiting room. Lydia is crying and Derrick has his arms wrapped around her.

The door opens and Ig steps inside. He wears his hoodie to try and be as inconspicuous as possible. They are stunned to see him. Lydia rises from the couch and embraces him.

LYDIA
Oh, son - I thought you were - they said you were--

IG
Yeah, I was for a minute, but I'm not anymore. It's a little bit hard to explain, I'll admit--

Derrick goes to Ig. He throws his arms around Ig. He's so grateful to see his son alive again.

DERRICK
But Ig - if anyone finds you here - if anyone knows you're alive--

Ig pulls slightly away from his parents and speaks seriously.

IG
I know, Dad. I need to do something about that. But before I do. Just in case anything bad happens. I wanted to come see you and apologize.

DERRICK
What in God's name do you have to apologize to us for?

IG
I've given you a lot of reasons to think the worst of me.

Lydia shakes her head with a terrible remorse.

LYDIA
I'm so sorry if we ever thought - if I ever thought...

IG
Trust me, we're all capable of awful things. And one way or another, I promise, everything is going to be all right now.

Ig is speaking with a deep fervor. Lydia puts her hand to her heart. But Derrick looks at Ig with fear and concern.

DERRICK
Son? What are you going to do? You aren't going to put yourself in any more danger, are you?

Ig doesn't want to lie to his parents but he doesn't want to tell them the truth either.

IG
I need to talk to Terry.

INT. TERRY'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Ig steps into the hospital room. Terry lies in bed, looking very pale and wan. He looks up at Ig regretfully.

TERRY
I tried to do what you wanted.

Ig sits down next to Terry. He is deeply remorseful.

IG
This isn't what I wanted. No matter what I said. Are you listening?

TERRY
Sure it's what you want, Ig, it's what I *deserve* - there's no way you can forgive me, after everything I--

IG
Demons don't forgive. But people can. People do. That's the whole point of being human. And I know it's what Merrin would've wanted. I owe it to her to try and be human.

TERRY
I should've told you everything right from the beginning. I'm so sorry.

Ig leans across the bed, speaking very intensely to Terry.

IG
I don't know if you can remember anything that's been happening lately.

TERRY
Sure I can. You made me promise to remember everything. And from here on out I'm keeping all my promises.

IG
Lee killed Merrin. I know he did. So there's something I need to do. And it's dangerous. If anything happens to me...you have to promise to take care of Mom and Dad for me.

TERRY
(immediately concerned)
What are you going to do?

IG
I'm going to go and see Lee. I'm gonna ask him to turn himself in.

Terry stares at Ig, his eyes nearly popping out of his head.

TERRY
Are you crazy?

IG
Everybody believes I'm guilty. Now more than ever. If Lee won't turn himself in, I'll always be on the run. I'll never be able to see you or Mom and Dad again. It won't be any kind of life.

Terry shakes his head, terrified at the idea of this.

TERRY
But it's not safe for you to--

IG
Last night the horns were working on him. They brought out the worst part of him. But now I can face him as a human being.

Ig is speaking simply and clearly but Terry is having a very hard time wrapping his mind around this.

TERRY
You actually believe there's good in Lee after everything he's done?

IG
I've known him all my life. He was my best friend. I have to give him the chance to do the right thing. Like I said...it's what Merrin would've wanted. And if he doesn't do the right thing...well, then I can take care of him, if I have to.

Ig fingers the cross around his neck. Terry shakes his head with a terrible sense of foreboding.

TERRY
I'm not leaving you to face Lee alone. That's what I did to Merrin and I've been in hell ever since. You have to let me come with you.

IG
No. I can't. If anything happens to me...I need to know you're all right. For Mom and Dad's sake.

Ig is resolute. It's clear to Terry that nothing he can say or do is going to change Ig's mind.

TERRY
You're a good man, Ignatius.

And at this, Ig allows himself a small, sly smile.

IG
Blasphemer.

EXT. LEE TOURNEAU'S HOUSE - EVENING

And under the cover of night, Ig walks down the quiet street. He knows that what he's about to attempt might very well kill him. But he also knows it's his only chance. He heads up the walk. He knocks on the door of Lee's house.

Lee comes to the door. He stands there staring at Ig. He doesn't know what to say for a moment, he's so stunned.

LEE
I'll be goddamned.

IG
You and me both, if we're not careful.

LEE
What did you - I mean, *how* did you--

IG
You don't remember anything that happened between us, do you?

Lee stares at Ig, completely dumbfounded and astonished.

LEE
You'd better come inside. If anybody sees you out here--

IG
Actually I was hoping we could take a walk. Nobody's looking for me - pretty much everybody thinks I'm dead. So what do you say?

Lee hesitates, deeply untrustworthy of the situation. But he's got no choice. Finally he nods.

EXT. KNOWLES RIVER - EVENING

Ig leads Lee across the banks of the river. He stops for a moment and gestures out toward the water.

IG
Remember when we were kids and I rode a shopping cart down this hill?

LEE
Of course I do. You went flying into the lake. Scariest thing I ever saw. You nearly drowned.

IG
I *would've* drowned if it hadn't been for you. I would've died that day.

LEE
Anybody would've done what I did.

IG
But you're the one who did it. I'll always be grateful to you for that.

Ig nods at Lee. Lee flushes red, deeply uncomfortable and remorseful for all sorts of reasons he can't admit to.

LEE
What's the point of bringing up all this ancient history?

IG
Come on. We're almost there.

Lee opens his mouth to respond but Ig is already five steps ahead of him, walking deeper and deeper into the forest.

EXT. GIDEON WOODS - NIGHT

Night has fallen but the moon is full and the skies are clear. Ig leads Lee over to the tree. Lee tenses up noticeably.

LEE
Come on, Ig, why are you doing this to yourself? Why do you need to come back out here?

IG
You know why. Because this is the place where you killed Merrin.

Lee starts to sputter a little bit in protest.

LEE
Ig, what are you - you think that I - have you lost your mind?

IG
Don't ask me how I know. You wouldn't believe me if I told you. But things will go a lot easier for both of us if you don't lie to me. All right?

Lee considers this. Then he nods. He is full of genuine remorse and anguish. Ig nods back at him.

LEE
What are you going to do to me?

IG
That's up to you.

Lee stares at Ig, not even remotely trusting the situation.

LEE
What the hell do you want?

IG
I know if you could go back in time and erase everything that happened that night, you would. And I know you killed her because you loved her too much and you knew you could never have her.

These are the hardest words that Ig's ever had to say. Lee just stares at him, completely unbelieving.

LEE
How can you possibly--

IG
Listen to me, Lee - we all have evil in us. But we always have a choice. And you have a choice to make right now. I need you to help me.

But Lee is shaking his head, utterly devastated by all this.

LEE
What can I possibly do for you?

IG
You can come down to the police station with me and you can tell them what you did to Merrin.

It takes a moment for Lee to grasp what Ig is saying.

LEE
Ig - what are you--?

IG
You have to confess. It's the only way to set me free. And it's the only way you can make any kind of amends for what you've done.

Ig is speaking with enormous compassion. Lee allows the truth of Ig's words to wash over him. His eyes start to water over with tears.

IG (CONT'D)
So I'm asking the best part of you - the human part of you. You saved my life once. Will you do it again?

Ig extends his arm to Lee hopefully. Lee is shaking a little. He looks up at Ig with genuine remorse in his eyes.

LEE
I never meant to hurt Merrin. I never meant to hurt you. It's the last thing I wanted.

Ig nods encouragingly. Lee is speaking with deep feeling. The night around them is quiet and still.

LEE (CONT'D)
And you're right - this is the only way I can make things right for you.

Ig smiles gratefully. He extends his arm further toward Lee. Lee extends his own arm to shake Ig by the hand...

IG
Thank you, Lee, thank you.

...But then Lee's hand forms itself into a fist. He lets fly and punches Ig in the face. Ig falls backward, more stunned than hurt.

LEE
But I can't. I'm sorry. I can't.

Lee grabs the pitchfork from the ground. He strikes Ig in the legs with the back of the pitchfork. Ig doubles over in pain and crumples to the ground. He lands flat on his back.

Now Lee takes the pitchfork and stabs Ig across the face and stomach with it, very hard. He stabs Ig again and again until Ig is a bloody mess lying there on the ground.

IG
Lee?

Ig lies on the ground helplessly. Lee shakes his head.

LEE
I won't give up my life - I can't.

And Lee holds the pitchfork high in the air...

All of a sudden Terry comes running through the woods, stumbling out of the trees. He takes a flying leap into the air and lands on Lee's back. They both tumble to the ground.

TERRY
Get off him - you fucking lunatic!

Terry tosses Lee to the ground. He climbs on top of Lee, punching him in the face, very hard.

But Lee manages to get one leg free. He knees Terry in the chest. Terry winces in pain. With a burst of strength, Lee manages to shove Terry off of him. Terry falls backward. Ig tries to get up but he's in too much pain to move.

LEE
Goddamn you!

Terry comes at Lee again but Lee manages to pick up the rusty pitchfork from the ground. Terry comes at Lee, trying to wrest the pitchfork from Lee's hands. The two of them are locked in a struggle over the pitchfork.

Finally, with a burst of strength, Lee manages to toss Terry to the ground. He picks up the pitchfork and holds it high over Terry's heart.

TERRY
Lee - don't - Lee!

Ig coughs and spits up blood. He can see that Lee is evil and beyond saving. So there's only one thing left to do. Lee has given him no choice.

Ig's fingers grasp at the gold cross around his neck. He whispers under his breath...

IG
I'm sorry, Merrin, I'm so sorry.

...And he rips Merrin's cross off his neck.

The transformation is instantaneous. It's impossible to describe the devil that Ig transforms into. But he is monstrous and fearsome and completely without mercy.

Terry and Lee look up at Ig in terror. Lee drops the pitchfork. He can't turn away from Ig's eyes.

LEE
What the - what the hell?

Quickly Ig turns to Terry with fire in his eyes.

IG
Get as far away as fast as you can.
It's gonna get really bad now.

TERRY
I'm not gonna leave you!

IG
Get out of here. You promised me.

Ig and Terry hold each other's steady gaze. Then Terry nods. He backs away. Lee looks at Terry with utter panic.

LEE
Terry - please - don't leave me here alone with him - please!

But Terry has already run off into the night. Ig watches after Terry to make sure that he's definitely gone.

Lee looks up at Ig, quaking with fear. Ig faces Lee with the last ounce of human compassion he's got left in him.

IG
I really wanted there to be some good left in you, Lee.

Ig stands over Lee, who drops to his knees before Ig.

LEE
How did you - how did this happen to you - Ig?

IG
I don't really know. But without Merrin...this is what I became.

LEE
I loved her too. You know that. Love made devils of us both.

And at this, Ig allows himself one last, sly smile.

IG
Isn't that the truth?

In a last, desperate attempt to get away, Lee grabs the pitchfork and smashes the base of it into Ig's knees.

Ig's legs crumple beneath him and he falls to the ground. Now Lee rises quickly to his feet.

Lee shoves the tines of the pitchfork into Ig's belly. Ig crumples to the ground.

Then, with his final ounce of strength, Ig rams his head into Lee's stomach. The horns puncture Lee's skin. Lee lets out a wail of agony.

Ig pulls the horns out of Lee's stomach. They make a wet, sucking sound as they come loose. Lee falls to the ground and rolls onto his side, in the fetal position.

Ig stands over Lee, his arms outstretched. Slowly we become aware that snakes are starting to crawl across the ground.

The snakes drop down from the branches of the trees. Ig watches impassively as the snakes crawl up Lee's body. They are all over Lee now.

The largest of the snakes slithers headfirst into Lee's mouth. Lee tries to bite down on the snake but he can't.

The snake's tail shivers furiously back and forth, pumping itself down Lee's throat.

Lee chokes on the snake. He rolls onto his back, screaming now, although it's hard to make any sound with his throat filled with snake.

Lee's heels beat against the ground. His face is deepening to a color that's almost black in the night. Branches of veins stand out in Lee's temples. And then he dies.

Ig's skin is so red it starts to catch fire. He is burning.

Ig takes a step closer to Lee. He is nothing but vengeance and punishment now.

Ig goes up entirely in flames.

The ball of flame envelops Lee's corpse.

Ig is barely visible inside the ball of fire. The fire moves up the trunk of the tree. And as it does, Merrin appears in the window of the tree house. She stares down at him, her red hair flowing in the flames.

MERRIN
Ig. Here I am. Ig.

Ig looks up at Merrin. Then he looks at himself. The fire burns away his red skin.

He is restored to his true self for good now.

He climbs the burning tree and heads inside the treehouse.

INT. TREEHOUSE - NIGHT

The treehouse appears to be in a state of perpetual burning - always ablaze but never consumed. Merrin stands there.

Ig reaches into his pocket and pulls out the two golden rings. He places one of them on Merrin's finger. She places the other ring on his finger.

IG
I love you.

He holds on to her for dear life. He kisses her. And all around them everything is burning.

EXT. SACRED HEART OF MARY CHURCH - DAY

And we are at Ig's funeral service. There's not much of a crowd. Derrick holds Lydia. They are both crying. Terry stands at attention, carrying his trumpet.

Father Mould finishes his prayer. Ig's coffin is slowly lowered into the ground. Terry sprinkles dirt on top of it.

Then he reaches in his pocket. He pulls out Merrin's cross. He lays it on top of the coffin. He gives a small salute.

The mourners start to head off. Dale and Heidi stand a little bit apart from the others. They approach Derrick and Lydia. Then Dale extends his arm to Derrick. They shake hands. Heidi embraces Lydia. They hold each other tightly.

Terry is the only one left at the grave. He puts his trumpet to his lips and plays a sweet old tune. We've heard it before: it's the song Ig asked him to play at his funeral.

Derrick turns back to listen to his son playing the trumpet for a moment. He smiles sadly. Then he turns and heads down the hill with Lydia.

Terry finished playing and puts down the trumpet. Then, softly, as if on the breeze, he can hear the sound of another trumpet.

Terry looks around but it seems like he's the only one who can hear the music. He thinks for a moment.

Then he lifts the trumpet to his lips and the two trumpets play, wrapped around each other in perfect harmony.

And when the song is finished, Terry puts the trumpet down, and he allows himself a fond smile for Ig.

TERRY
Poor devil.

<u>THE END</u>